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ABSTRACT

Written primarily for teachers of elderly students and for elderly readers, this manual provides information about the elderly reader, about language, and about the reading process itself. The first chapter contains a review of current research on elderly readers that provides information about the materials they like to read, the materials they find difficult, and how they view themselves as readers. Chapter two offers a discussion of the reading processes of older readers and shows that reading is a complex interaction between the language and thought of the author and the language and thought of the reader. Chapter three presents an outline of a descriptive study of older readers' reading. Specifically, it reports on the subjects, the tasks they performed, and the instrument used to analyze their oral reading. Chapter four discusses the results of the study in depth. Chapter five offers suggestions and actual lessons for use by teachers in preparing a program for older readers, and chapter six outlines a reading program for older readers to follow on their own. Appendixes contain two stories for use by older readers, an interview form, a coding sheet and reader profile sheet for use with a reading miscue inventory, tables of data concerning patterns of grammatical relationships and of comprehension, and a story retelling format. (FL)

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DESCRIBING AND IMPROVING THE READING
STRATEGIES OF ELDERLY READERS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
HELPING THE OLDER READER	v
CHAPTER	
One THE OLDER READER	1
Two READING AS A LANGUAGE PROCESS	13
Three READERS AND TASKS	24
Four OLDER READERS' READING	32
Five A READING PROGRAM FOR ELDERLY STUDENTS	74
Six HELP YOURSELF: A READING PROGRAM FOR YOU	101
APPENDIX	
A THE BLUE LOBSTER: A LIFE CYCLE	114
B AFTER TWENTY YEARS	120
C BURKE READING INTERVIEW (Modified for Older Readers)	125
D READING MISCUE INVENTORY CODING SHEET READER PROFILE	127
E PATTERNS OF GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS PATTERNS OF COMPREHENSION	129
F RETELLING FORMAT	130
REFERENCES	133

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Dorothy J. Watson
Project Director

HELPING THE OLDER READER

This manual on learning to read was written primarily for teachers of elderly students as well as for elderly readers themselves. We hope, however, that any teacher or reader who comes into contact with this work will learn something about the elderly reader, language, and the reading process and that they will find some suggestions that will both enhance their teaching and improve their own reading abilities.

We are told that to insure success in selling tubas or teaching reading you've got to know the territory--and the people in the territory. We begin our study by heeding that advice. Chapter One is a review of current research on the elderly reader that gives us information about the materials older readers like to read, the reading materials they find difficult, and how they view themselves as readers.

You will notice that for the most part current research has to do with what the elderly are reading, not how they are reading. We address ourselves to the how of reading and report our findings in Chapters Two through Four.

It becomes obvious rather quickly that we have a particular point of view about how the elderly--or, for that matter, anyone--ought to learn to read. You can't miss our position: we state it again and again. In Chapter Two we lay the groundwork

for our instructional position by presenting what we believe about language and the reading process. We show that reading is in fact a complex interaction between the language and thought of the author and the language and thought of the reader. The proficient reader is shown to be involved in an active search for meaning. In this search the reader draws upon previous background as well as the information present in the text. In other words, the reader, we believe, brings something to the text in order to get something from it. This interaction places a responsibility on the reader that involves far more than a skills approach to reading. Our view of the reading process is not rooted in skills that try to splinter language into small units of letters, sounds, syllables and words in isolation, which readers are asked to sit down and study. Rather, we view reading as involving the processing of whole language (simultaneously composed of letters, sounds, grammar and meaning) where meaning is found in the inter-relationship of past experience and the words in the total story or article or text. For example, a reader encountering "blind" and "Venetian" would receive a different message when reading, "The Venetian blind fell out the window," than when reading "The blind Venetian fell out the window." To say it another way, understanding is not as dependent on the ability to pronounce each word as on whether the reader has a previously developed concept of what a blind Venetian and a Venetian blind are. Without this knowledge, which must be brought to the reading task, comprehension is not possible.

While Chapter Two carefully describes our view of the reading process, Chapters Three and Four present an outline of our descriptive study of the older readers' reading and a detailed report of the results. Chapter Three specifically reports on our subjects, the tasks they were asked to perform, and the instrument (Reading Miscue Inventory) used to analyze the oral reading of the older readers. In Chapter Four the results of our testing are presented, and discussed in depth.

In Chapters Five and Six we try to put our instruction where our theory is and present in Chapter Five suggestions and actual lessons that a teacher might adapt for his or her older readers. These activities are consistent with the notions that an instructional program for the elderly must be student-centered, must involve all of language, and must consider reading as a process in which the reader and the author bring their knowledge and past experience together so that the reader can construct meaning. Chapter Six is for those older readers who want and can do it on their own.

CHAPTER ONE

THE OLDER READER

Obviously, people beyond age sixty are not all alike. The disparity is as wide between sixty- and eighty-year-olds as between forty- and sixty-year-olds (Blau, 1973). What then, can be said regarding the concerns of and demands on all older readers?

Concerns of the Elderly and Demands on the Aged

A possible concern for many elderly readers is that most (but not all) have not been engaged in formal schooling for many years. The elderly may be cut off from classrooms as well as from other institutional settings where they can keep up with fast changing vocabulary. "Of 450,000 words in our language only 250,000 would have been intelligible to Shakespeare four centuries ago" (Toffler, 1970). Wilson (1977) states further, "Terms like fastback, wash and wear, flashcubes, and intercom appear as new words in reading material. Reading is impeded by new vocabulary, resulting in basic comprehension problems."

The need to understand consumer information is another major concern for older Americans. In a speech before the American Academy of Political and Social Science in April, 1978, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano stated that five percent

of the gross national product and twenty-four percent of the federal budget for fiscal 1978 is going to the elderly, and he predicts that sometime between the years 2010 and 2025, benefits paid to the aged will reach ten percent of the GNP and forty percent of the federal outlay. Unfortunately, before the elderly can jump on this much needed "gravy train," the ability to read and comprehend eligibility for benefits is required. Equally, in a study entitled Identifying the Reading Demands on the Aged, Allington and Walmsby (1979) formulated the readability level of documents from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Public Assistance, Medicaid, food stamps, and Medicare. Their findings indicate a majority of documents were written at a ninth through twelfth grade reading level, but approximately one-third required above a twelfth grade reading level. In other words, it "would be tough going for those whose formal schooling ended fifty years ago."

Another concern of the elderly is reading for leisure. Reading has sometimes been compared to athletic talent in that the better we are at it the more we enjoy it. Atchley (1972) notes that

Older people enjoy a wide variety of leisure pursuits, but the data suggests that older people--particularly the less well-educated--are reluctant to engage in autonomous leisure activities such as reading, listening to music, painting, sculpting, or writing.

This reluctance is at least partly caused by the older person's

feeling of incompetence in such activities. Often these feelings are unjustified. Clearly, educators should understand that reading is an on-going learned activity that we never completely "master." Only fools would state that they can read everything written with complete understanding, and, of course, reading without understanding is not reading.

Another demand of the elderly reader is reading as a tool of social advocacy. As people grow older they appear to take a stronger interest in politics. Voting percentages peak at about sixty-two, and people over seventy as a group turn out over seventy-five percent to vote in Presidential elections as compared with about sixty percent for those aged twenty-five. This same pattern exists with party identification or interest in political affairs (Atchley, 1972). Learning about party policies, candidates, and their stands on issues can to some extent be gained by television and radio, but to have a depth of knowledge about the issues requires reading, both widely and in depth (Lloyd, 1976).

Bibliotherapy is the use of reading to help solve emotional problems and promote mental health. For the elderly, especially those who can not always seek outside help or may no longer have a close loved one in whom to confide, reading about others who have encountered and solved similar problems may help them see hope for themselves (Dreyer, 1977).

A final concern for the elderly is the actual cost of books. Buying a two-dollar-fifty-cent paperback best seller may not be a great concern for some, but for elderly persons on very fixed incomes, this may be out of the question. Yet who among us would deny that there is a real joy in owning books? Should the elderly be denied the right to go back and read a favorite passage? Should they never have the satisfaction of writing editorial comments on the margins of books as President Truman was said to have enjoyed doing?

Interests of the Elderly Reader

Teachers of reading, as well as those who work with the elderly, must realize that the elderly resent being stereotyped. Research has shown nevertheless that certain interests are common among many elderly readers. Librarians doing research with elderly and visually handicapped readers found that even severely visually impaired readers would reject large type books unless such books lay within their fields of interest (Buswell, 1971).

Generally speaking, non-fiction and fiction balance one to three. In non-fiction, biography, particularly of historical figures, personal reminiscences or more or less contemporary "greats" are very popular (Buswell, 1971). One researcher reported that her experimental group of nursing home residents preferred nostalgic stories which provided a forum for reminiscing and discussion about the "good old days" (Lovelace, 1977). Surprisingly enough,

the elderly do not show a pronounced interest in inspirational literature (Buswell, 1971). The Bible is often mentioned as a source of inspiration, but the amount of time spent reading the Bible and satisfaction received from it are hard to determine (Watson and Robinson, 1978).

Novels that have explicit descriptions of sex are shunned by the elderly as a whole. Books from the past by Yeats, Slaughter, Beys, Harold Bell Wright, and Gene Stranton Porter are favorites. These ghosts from past best seller lists when "life was successful" have great appeal (Buswell, 1971). The elderly's list of preferences reads like an escape from harsh reality, with light romance, biographies, westerns, and mysteries as perennial favorites (Kingston, 1977).

Since many in the elderly population are interested in politics and current events, it would follow that newspapers and magazines dealing with current issues would be important reading material for the elderly. Indeed, research substantiates this fact. Buswell notes "news magazines are among the most popular of the periodicals, and the daily paper is must reading" (Buswell, 1971). In fact, the elderly of both sexes seem to enjoy popular periodicals of all kinds, but especially home and women's magazines.

Reading Habits of the Elderly

In a survey of 5000 Older American Survivor and Dependents Insurance (OASDI) beneficiaries in four selected areas of the United States, researchers found some sixty percent

of elderly people read an average of one hour each day (Riley et al., 1969). It was found that older persons devote significantly more time to reading than do younger adults. For teachers of reading the message is clear: oldsters do read. Research, however, has uncovered some limitations. There seems to be evidence that senior citizens and retirees, despite increased leisure time and less income, do not suddenly develop new or extensive reading habits. In addition, to interest non-readers in any new kind of book appears to be next to impossible. It seems to be true that reading during old age is, in the main, a continuation of lifelong reading habits (Bushwell, 1971).

Kingston (1977) reported that significantly more females than males join and participate in book clubs. Reading habits as far as book groups are concerned may be sex-related. Riley et al. (1969) report just the opposite for actual reading, saying that time spent reading increases for men over sixty, but not for women. Riley et al. (1976) reports that with increasing education increases are also observed in reading hours, in number of magazines read, and in the percentage who read newspapers regularly and have read a book in the last year.

Reading seems to encourage habits of socialization. Individuals who read do not isolate themselves socially; rather, they seek to communicate with society (Steinberg, 1972). One habit that librarians have observed is the lack of skills the elderly show in choosing their own books.

Possibly, this lack of selection skills is due to changes that have occurred in libraries. Previously, libraries were much smaller and the selection was narrower so that choosing a book was easier, or perhaps librarians were able to give more assistance. Even the method of selection may have changed dramatically from the librarian's finding the book for the patron to today's self-service.

Background of the Elderly and Its Effect upon Reading Ability

The importance of helping the elderly improve in reading competence cannot be emphasized enough when we stop to consider all the reasons for reading and reading well in today's complex society. The sheer number of elderly persons is increasing so rapidly that today's methods of passing out "goodies" to the elderly and treating the symptoms instead of finding real solutions to their problems will become more and more insufficient in a mass society.

The period after World War II saw the United States faced with a "baby boom." Demographers are now stating that a "senior boom" is beginning and will continue into the future. The total U.S. population now calls between ten and eleven percent of its citizens "elderly." By the year 200 it is projected that 12.5 percent will be so listed (Weg, 1976). Thus, attempts to draw the elderly into the mainstream are becoming more important with every passing year. The importance of reading in involving the elderly cannot be stressed enough, for without reading ability adequate to meet current needs the elderly cannot fully function.

Much has been said of the mental health of the elderly, but only a handful of these studies have dealt with its relationship to reading. Some studies have shown that expressions of pleasure and satisfaction have come from the elderly themselves in how much reading helps one cope with daily living. Wolf (1977) drew many responses regarding the purposes for reading, but was able to synthesize these into consistent themes. First, purposes for the teaching of reading go beyond functional literacy and are related to filling lifelong needs. Secondly, reading does provide many elderly persons with help in coping with the problems of aging.

Those working with the older reader should keep in mind some physical impairments that usually will not prevent learning, still must be understood and, to the greatest extent possible, accommodated. A recent article in the newspaper replied to the protestations that the President doesn't wear reading glasses "because he has such good eyes." To this comment a prominent Washington ophthalmologist wrote, "That's impossible at his age. That means he either can't read--or he's a medical miracle." Nearly everyone after age forty is struck by a normal condition called presbyopia (Woodruff and Berrin, 1975). Hearing can also be affected by the normal aging process. What this should say to educators is that in teaching situations these conditions must be considered. At least two ophthalmologists have stressed that, contrary to popular opinion, reading

does not weaken the eyes. They feel that older people should be encouraged to read as much as they like for as long as they live (Kingston, 1977). Reaction time may be somewhat slower in the elderly, however, not to the extent that learning would be affected.

Intellectual decline is always a concern to teachers of the elderly. One prominent researcher in the field (Schaie, 1970) stated that most declines in intelligence with age are really myth. Until people are ready to die, they appear to perform intellectually as well as when they were young.

Models of Reading Utilized by the Elderly

The Burke Interview Modified for Older Readers (BIMOR) was recently used in a study at the University of Missouri-Columbia entitled "A Psycholinguistic Description of Reading Miscues by Readers Over the Age of Sixty-Five Years."

The BIMOR uses an interview format to determine the reader's personal model of reading. The questions on the BIMOR are:

1. When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do? Do you ever do anything else?
2. Who is a good reader that you know?
3. What makes _____ a good reader?
4. Do you think that _____ ever comes to something s/he doesn't know when _____ is reading?
5. When _____ does come to something s/he doesn't know, what do you think s/he does about it?

6. If you knew that someone was having difficulty reading, how would you help that person?
7. What would a teacher do to help that person?
8. How did you learn to read?
9. What would you like to do better as a reader?
10. Do you think that you are a good reader?
11. What do you read routinely, like every day or every week?
12. What do you like most of all to read?
13. Can you remember any special book or the most memorable thing you have ever read?
14. What is the most difficult thing(s) you have to read?

Based on their answers to this set of questions, readers fall into three models. Model One might be classified as a Letter-Sound Relationship Model. In this model, readers believe the key element is to "sound out words," and reading is a very precise process whereby each sound is correctly stated and words are added together to form sentences and paragraphs. Sometimes these readers are considered to be "word bound," for if they are unable to say words correctly, they feel that the reading process is incomplete. If these readers cannot sound out a word, their second strategy is to ask for help, thereby becoming dependent readers. Harste (1978) visualizes this model of reading as the pyramid model:

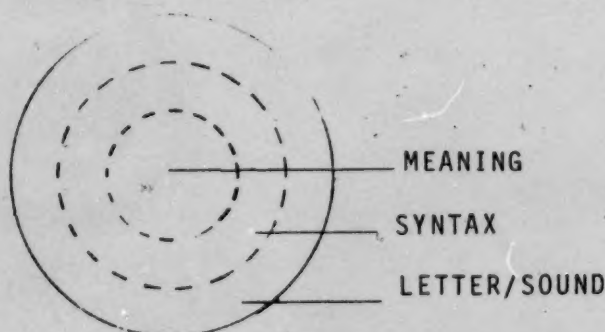


The first and most important reading strategy, to this reader, is letter/sound matching, saying words is a major goal, and last and least important is gaining meaning.

The second model of reading is a "sight word" approach. The reader who uses this approach will indicate words are the all important aspect of reading. Here is the reader who will "look it up in the dictionary." If the material has too many difficult words or if the sentence structure is ambiguous, this reader will give up altogether. This skill model of reading is depicted as:



The final model of reading that can be determined from the BIMOR is the model used by a certain type of reader who, when asked "What do you do when you come to something you don't know?" responds, "I try to think about it and then guess what it is from the rest of the sentence." Such readers zoom right into the meaning, and their model of reading might look like this:



The aim for these readers is to get meaning by bringing their past experiences to the text.

The Burke interview, used in a pilot study (Watson and Robinson, 1978), gave some interesting insights into the reading strategies of the elderly. Most elderly readers answered the question of "When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do?," by saying, "I look it up in the dictionary." However, when they were asked to read aloud, no mention was made of the dictionary and, though some attempts were made to sound out words, for the most part the elderly readers in this study did try to guess the meaning from context.

Remembering how they learned to read seemed difficult for the elderly readers in the study. However, almost all expressed a desire to be better readers. Typical answers ranged from "I wish I could read faster" to "I wish I could understand everything I read."

The Burke interview seemed to uncover some reminiscing in the elderly, for many named as their favorites books they had read as children; old familiar books such as Little Women and Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm were mentioned. In all, the Burke Interview uncovered much the same preferences that former research indicated, that is, light romance, little sex, and mysteries.

CHAPTER TWO

READING AS A LANGUAGE PROCESS

The view of the reading process that is presented in this book and upon which the strategy lessons in Chapter Five are based is very different from the view of reading held by many reading specialists. While some teachers of reading believe that diagnosis and remediation based upon skills tests is a necessary part of any reading program aimed at increasing reading proficiency, we do not agree. As a consequence, our view of reading does not deal with identifying how many sight words readers can recognize, or whether they understand vowel sounds or can successfully identify beginning, middle or the end portions of words. Neither will our concern with comprehension be based on a student's ability to answer a series of post-reading questions.

What, then, is our view of reading, and how do we plan to go about increasing proficiency among elderly learners? We can begin by saying that reading is a language process that involves a complex interaction between an author and a reader. This interaction is not limited to a reader being able to sound out the individual words that an author used to convey either a story or a piece of informative text.

Successfully completing the "recoding" or word identification procedure of going from print to sound never guarantees that the "decoding" process of gaining meaning has taken place. And meaning is our goal.

In looking closely at the relationship between word identification and reading for meaning, we might begin by examining the following isolated words:

the dog angry big a man puerile

Standing alone they present a random selection of words that convey only superficial information. We can probably classify most of these words very easily. We would therefore label "the" as an article, "dog" and "man" as nouns, and "angry" and "big" as adjectives. When presented on word lists, these words have no other relationship to each other. In fact, we might not even know what to do with "puerile" or to classify it as an adjective unless we had prior knowledge of its meaning. Thus, our ability to decide what each word is in this instance depends solely on our skill in either recognizing it on sight or using some sounding out strategy. If, for example, we didn't know "puerile" but could use syllabification and phonics rules to decide that the "u" is long, the "e" and "i" represent the schwa sound and the final "e" is silent, we still wouldn't have a clue about its meaning.

However, given the same words in another context,

"The angry dog bit the big, puerile man."

the words suddenly lose their randomness and instead convey a situational text that is generally meaningful. Without "puerile" the text is not at all difficult to understand. We now have additional information about "puerile," and now we know at least that it is an adjective modifying "man." Yet, unless we, as in the word list, bring a prior background of information about its meaning to this sentence, the semantic or meaning portion of the text still does not provide sufficient information about what "puerile" contributes to the sentence. We would have to go to the dictionary to look it up.

However, let's look at this sentence as part of a longer text.

The man left the store carrying a paper bag. He walked to the park, where he knew many dogs roamed freely. Opening the bag, he took out some sausage and left it on the ground. A large dog approached, sniffed the meat and began to eat. While he was eating, the man quickly attached a smoke bomb to the dog's tail. The bomb sizzled and sent off clouds of smoke. The angry dog bit the big, puerile man.

With this additional contextual, or semantic, information, the meaning of "puerile" becomes easier to guess or predict. The behavior of the man is childish and silly. We can infer this in the context of the paragraph, irrespective of whether we are able to correctly pronounce "puerile."

When we say that reading involves more than word identification, we therefore mean that to understand a printed message, it is important to tune in to the grammatical and meaning systems of language that in turn provide cues about word identification. For example, in the sentence

Bill gave his teacher an _____.

we could predict any number of choices for this blank. The choices are most importantly dependent, however, upon our understanding of a pupil-teacher relationship. We might make any number of predictions in this context; however, our predictions are limited by the noun marker "an," which we know precedes a noun beginning with a vowel. Using both our background of experience and our knowledge about the grammatical constraints of our language, we might choose "answer," "apple," "eraser," or "opinion." Alternate choices, such as "angora," "automobile," or "orangutan" would not be predicted here due to our previous expectation of what might be suitable in this context. Had the sentence been

Bill gave his teacher an a _____.

our prediction would have been even more limited. If in this instance we chose "answer," we could be well satisfied, since no additional information is available to help us decide whether our prediction is satisfactory or not. On the sentence level, "Bill gave his teacher an answer"

is meaningful. However, if the text were longer with a following sentence of "She scolded him for having food in the classroom and told him he would get it back after school," the situation changes. Now the additional textual information tells us that our first prediction, "answer," while acceptable on the sentence level, was not so on a broader text level. A proficient reader would recognize the discrepancy and go back, or regress, to correct the initial response.

Even with these limited examples, we can see that in interacting with print much more has been involved than focusing on word identification. Readers who make the text work best for them are those who use their backgrounds of knowledge as they approach the text. The text is in turn processed using the sound-symbol relationships along with the grammatical plus contextual semantic information present in the text. The text, therefore, is viewed as consisting of three cue systems that work together to convey the author's message: 1) the sound-symbol (graphophonemic), 2) the grammatical (syntactic) and 3) the meaning (semantic). In the previous example,

Bill gave his teacher an a .
the graphophonemic system helped us eliminate all choices not beginning with "a;" the grammatical cue system told us the blank needed a noun beginning with a vowel; and the semantic cue system suggested the need for an item that made sense within a pupil-teacher interaction. These three

cue systems of language are regularly used by proficient readers. Developing reader awareness for how they too can use the cue systems to help increase proficiency is one of our goals in developing strategy lessons for the elderly. While the above examples are limited, intended only to give some insight into how the cue systems interact as a reader processes text, the behavior of readers in actual reading situations is much more revealing in showing how these cue systems are used by proficient readers. Research in reading over the past fifteen years has conclusively shown that proficiency in reading is not limited to accurate word identification (Goodman and Burke, 1973). All readers have been shown to make oral responses while reading that vary from the text. The responses of the proficient readers differ from those of the less effective in that the changes that are made do not alter the meaning of the text.

In examining some responses obtained during oral reading (Chippendale, 1979), we can better see how proficient readers use both their own background of experience and the cue systems of text to gain meaning while reading. Yet, in all instances, they have as readers made some changes, which we call miscues, from the text being read, indicating they were doing more than sounding out individual words. By calling these oral variations to print "miscues" rather than "errors," we are acknowledging that all changes made during oral reading are not equally significant. Our concern is with those miscues that interfere with meaning.

The grammatical cue system is a powerful one in helping readers decode, or read, any given text. Its strength is due to the prior knowledge about grammar that each reader brings to reading. Having obtained control over the grammatical system of their dialects of English at an early age without any formal teaching, the readers who unconsciously use this knowledge to produce an endless variety of sentences during oral speech also use this knowledge to reconstruct the meaning of text being read.

For example, the reader making the following substitutions

Another kind animal
Other kinds of animals can't do that.

is showing intuitive awareness of how number affects the overall structure, or grammar, of this sentence. Once having substituted "another" for "other," therefore, this reader changes the rest of the sentence to maintain its grammatical structure. In another instance a reader makes some omissions (circled on the text) that also work together to maintain the grammatical nature of the sentence:

Would you mind telling ^{me} ~~me~~ over again, for
everything has become so mixed up?

The reliance on grammatical structure can also be seen in instances where readers impose a parallel structure on

the text, such as when one reader inserted noun markers where the author did not.

and tell the Princess and ^{the} Captains and ^{the} Councillors

This reliance on the grammatical cue system has been shown to affect all readers. Even in instances when readers are having trouble and can no longer avoid altering the meaning of the text, they frequently do not lose touch with the grammatical structure. Often, for example, readers who actually produce non-words in trying to sound out an unfamiliar portion of text maintain the grammatical function of the text, such as the reader who read

^{\$} ~~wretchedly~~ ^{whickly} poor families (\$ = non-word)

and thereby maintained an adverbial construction, signalled by both voice inflection during reading and the "-ly" suffix. In this latter example the intuitive knowledge that this construction needed an adverb, rather than a focus on only the final portion of the word, triggered the miscue.

The semantic cue system is also a continually operating radar system that monitors the proficient reader's processing of text. As long as meaning is maintained, the proficient reader continues reading. Thus, in reading

Peering from her hiding place in the boot,

^{she}
the lobster could see

a proficient reader would continue despite the substitution, since meaning had not been changed. Similarly, the reader would not correct when reading

She flipped her tail and shot backward, stirring
up a screen of mud ^{she covered} to cover her retreat.

Through the semantic cue system the text provides contextual information to help the reader make decisions about portions of text that are not immediately decoded. For example, one reader initially had difficulty decoding "temperature" because there was not enough predictability in the context of the text to help him make a decision. He had no trouble once he had been given additional semantic information.

mammal's *+ Temperature*
If a mammal is healthy, the temperature of
its blood stays the same whether it is in a very
hot place or a very cold place. A mammal's blood
is warm. Birds are warm-blooded, too. Fish
aren't warm-blooded. Their blood temperature
changes to match the temperature around them.

Often proficient readers will change something in the text during oral reading to make the text come closer to their own speech patterns. These changes further illustrate the close interrelationship that exists between the text and readers who use it and their own knowledge to gain meaning. For example, the following somewhat awkward literary structure was changed by the reader to flow

more naturally:

And then I
I loosed myself from him and went and set my
companions free.

All the miscues that have been used to illustrate how proficient readers handle text have shown changes made during oral reading that do not affect the meaning. Proficient readers are further characterized by their concern for going back and self-correcting in those instances where meaning has been altered or lost. Thus, for example, a reader who read

© Sometimes
There are sharks in this water. Someone is
apt to get hurt.

recognized that the initial prediction of "sometimes" did not fit with the text that followed and self-corrected. Similarly, a correction ensued when the reader recognized that meaning had been changed in the following:

© there came
Many of my men landed there.

Proficient readers, therefore, are readers who, while miscuing during oral reading, produce miscues that in the majority of instances do not affect comprehension. Y. Goodman and Burke (1972) suggest that when 60% or more of a reader's miscues for each selection do not result in comprehension loss, the reader is revealing the use of

effective reading strategies. Readers who process text well also show us that they are focusing on the meaning of the broader text base and not sounding out individual words. In fact, these readers are using strategies of sampling portions of text, making predictions about what is to follow, and reading on if the predictions do not affect meaning. These readers go back, or regress, to self-correct once meaning has been changed.

In developing strategies that focus on seeking meaning rather than skill development, we feel we can provide elder readers with information that can make a significant difference to their reading proficiency. By focusing on meaning, we will not only help the readers break habits of word calling, which slow down the rate of processing text and interfere with meaning, but also encourage them to rely on a lifetime of language and living experience. By showing readers how they can use their life experiences to make predictions about any given text and by showing them how to process the text using the least amount of attention on sounding out the individual words, we will provide them with strategies they can use daily that will enhance their pleasure in reading. Since our strategies are language-based and not rooted in skills drills, readers will be able to rely consistently on the strong language bases they already possess, and they can avoid memorizing abstract rules that have little proven worth in helping readers gain meaning from text.

CHAPTER THREE

READERS AND TASKS

Subjects

The nine subjects in this study were volunteers recruited from local community centers catering to the elderly. The subjects included six women and three men, ranging in age from 67 to 95, with a mean age of 76. Eight subjects were Caucasian and one was Black. Their educational backgrounds ranged from completing seventh grade to finishing law school.

Data Collections

Data were collected either in the centers or homes of the subjects, depending upon the individual's preference. In most instances, all tasks were administered in a single session, which typically lasted about two hours. In three cases, due to subject fatigue, a second session was conducted to complete data gathering.

Data were collected in rooms free of extraneous activity or noise. The subject and the examiner were seated at a common table, and all but the Cloze task were tape-recorded.

The subjects were first presented the Burke Interview, then they read and retold the Blue Lobster: A Life Cycle (Appendix A), and finally they completed the cloze deletions

and retold the short story "After Twenty Years" (Appendix B). A description of each task and scoring procedures follows.

Tasks

The Burke Interview Modified for Older Readers (Appendix C). This task is designed to assess individual reactions to reading and provide a measure of how individual subjects view themselves as readers. The interview includes questions concerning what subjects read and how they feel they handle reading material that may initially present some difficulty, and further, it asks subjects to describe the strategies they believe a proficient reader uses when text becomes difficult. The original interview was expanded in this study to include questions dealing with how reading habits may have changed following retirement. A typed script of all responses was prepared for each subject.

The Reading Miscue Inventory. The subjects were asked to read orally the Blue Lobster: A Life Cycle by Carol and Donald Carrick (Dial Press, New York, 1975). This selection is 1488 words long and describes the life cycle of an exceptional lobster who miraculously survived the treacheries of ocean life and lived to reach a mature age. The content provides a comprehensive description of the development and growth of a lobster. It is an unusual text in that it combines narrative and expository prose in a style that was judged to be of exceptional literary merit by the research team.

During the oral reading the subject read from a typed script of the text while the researcher followed on her copy, marking miscues. Prior to each reading, the subject was given the following directions:

I'd like you to read this selection out loud. I won't interrupt you or help you in any way, so if you come to a place that gives you some trouble, just do what you would do if you were reading by yourself. When you are finished, I'll ask you to tell me what you remember about what you have read in your own words. Do you have any questions?

Following the oral reading the subject's retelling was recorded on a retelling guide. Once the subjects completed retelling what they remembered, the examiner asked, "Can you tell me more about. . . " aspects of the text that had been included in the retelling. All subsequent follow-up questions were open ended to permit the subjects the widest possible expression of what had been read. This retelling and open ended questioning allowed the readers to provide information about their understanding of specifics, generalizations and major concepts included in the text. Finally, subjects were presented examples of figurative language included in the text and asked to explain how they would interpret this language.

The researchers listened to each tape until all miscues were recorded. Then, making use of the Reading Miscue Inventory (R.M.I.), developed by Yetta Goodman and Carolyn Burke in 1972, the researchers entered the miscues on R.M.I. coding sheets and scored them. All tapes and

coding sheets were independently checked by another member of the research team prior to the scores being entered on the Reader Profile Sheet. All information gathered during the retelling was transcribed, and the retellings were scored, using the criteria of the R.M.I. for Informational Material:

Specifics	40
Generalizations	30
Major Concepts	30

Oral reading miscues were examined according to the criteria developed for the Reading Miscue Inventory (Appendix D). These criteria are very different from those used in scoring either standardized reading tests or informal reading inventories. The differences reflect the alternate views of the reading process that underlie these instruments.

Error analysis assessments are based on the view that reading is fundamentally rooted in accurate word perception. This view argues that a reader, to comprehend material, must first be able to sound out the words of which it is comprised. Thus, any oral variations from the text are called "errors" and are marked solely on the basis of differing from the words in text. In such a system error count becomes the major dimension of assessing reading proficiency, and successful responses to follow up questions based on right or wrong answers become the second major dimension.

In contrast, miscue analysis is founded on the belief that reading is only incidentally visual. The brain rather

than the eye is seen as the decision making center involved in decoding text. Since the reader's background influences decisions made while processing text, many miscues reflect a reader's anticipation of what is to come; this has little to do with the process of sounding out individual words. For example, readers who made the following substitutions:

One of the strange things a lobster can do
is detach ^{the legs claws} its leg or claw at certain joints and
grow one back again.

and

^{Another kind animal}
Other kinds of animals can't do that.

indicated that textual processing involves the grammatical and meaning cue systems as much as the graphic.

Criteria for the analysis of miscues have evolved to reflect research findings that have shown that all readers miscue and that miscues are a normal part of the reading process. Assessments of reading proficiency, therefore, are no longer made on the basis of whether readers miscue or even on how often they miscue. Rather, the R.M.I. maintains a neutrality about each miscue until it is analyzed according to multiple criteria that combine finally to show whether the miscue interferes with comprehension. The R.M.I. seeks to determine whether readers have developed effective reading strategies. The strategies

are determined to be effective if 60% or more of a reader's miscues on a given selection do not result in comprehension loss.

Recognizing that miscues are the result of a complex interaction of the language and thought of the reader and author, the R.M.I. has developed comprehensive criteria for coding each misuse (or observed response, O.R.) representing oral reading that varies from the text (or expected response, E.R.). These criteria examine the nature and function of each miscue and determine how it affects the graphic, grammatical and meaning properties of the text. In this examination all miscues are analyzed within the context of total text, or discourse. The right-wrong responses of error count analysis have been replaced by the following questions, used in making decisions about each miscue:

- (1) Is a dialect variation involved in the miscue?
- (2) Is a shift in intonation involved in the miscue?
- (3) How much does the miscue look like the expected response of the text? (graphic similarity)
- (4) How much does the miscue sound like the expected response of the text? (sound similarity)
- (5) Is the grammatical function of the miscue the same as the grammatical function of the text?
- (6) Is the miscue corrected?
- (7) Does the miscue result in a grammatical structure that is acceptable within the reader's dialect?

- (8) Does the miscue result in meaning that is acceptable within the reader's dialect?
- (9) Does the miscue result in a change of meaning?

The final scores, represented as percentage values, provide the examiner with information about: (1) for substitution miscues, the degree of graphic and sound similarity as well as grammatical function; and (2) for all miscues, patterns of comprehension and grammatical relationships. Comprehension proficiency is determined according to patterns of responses obtained from columns #6 (correction), #8 (semantic acceptability) and #9 (meaning change) of the R.M.I. Grammatical relationships are determined according to the patterns of responses obtained for columns #6 (correction), #7 (grammatical acceptability) and #8 (semantic acceptability). All percentage values, as well as patterns of multiple attempts for certain items of text, were recorded on individual profile sheets. (See Appendix E, Patterns of Grammatical Relationships and Patterns of Comprehension.)

The Cloze Procedure. The subjects were handed a typed script of O. Henry's short story, "After Twenty Years," which had a regular pattern of deletions based on the criteria established by Bormuth (1967). The story is 1300 words long and describes a rainy night when a man in a darkened store corner keeps a rendezvous made twenty years earlier.

The cloze procedure provides one effective way to assess how efficiently readers utilize the grammatical and meaning restraints present in the text to make decisions

about reconstructing the text. Because the graphic cue system is no longer available, subjects must make inferences on the basis of prior knowledge and the information present in the remaining text.

Responses are scored according to an exact match with the original text, with the exception of minor misspellings, which are allowed. Research seems to indicate that no significant difference exists between scoring exact matches and synonym responses (McKenna, 1977).

CHAPTER FOUR

OLDER READERS' READING

We come now to the heart of this study--the description of what older readers do when they read. Our reasons for selecting older readers for this investigation may not as yet be clear and may require further explication. First, we feel that teachers of older readers need curricular and instructional materials that stem from sound research information based on the readers they are working with. Second, we feel that if older readers understand how the reading process works and are given instruction based on such knowledge, they can help themselves become better readers. Finally, we want to test a model of reading against individuals who have had years of life experiences that can be brought to the reading task. We view reading as a psycholinguistic process in which the reader is a user of language, has pre-existing linguistic competence, and has a personal store of knowledge and experiences. Put simply, we feel that background and experience determine what is extracted from print. This belief raises an intriguing question: Do older readers use print information and their own vast background of knowledge in the same ways other groups of readers do? In effect, we are seeking to learn what aspects of the reading process are universal across age groups.

The Burke Interview Modified for Older Readers

The readers in our study revealed that they all had insights about the strategies they used when material became difficult. While all identified textual difficulty in terms of lack of knowledge about individual words rather than general content, their approaches to dealing with unknown words differed. Of our sample, looking up an unfamiliar word in the dictionary was the single most frequently cited strategy. Five of the group said it was something they did routinely. Of the other readers who did not mention using the dictionary, one said that when she was confronted by an unfamiliar word she liked to "mull it over" (Reader 5) to see if she could understand it or "just try to get the meaning" (Reader 4). Another reader, who said she usually "read on a little further" (Reader 7), used this contextual strategy along with reference to a dictionary. Still another (Reader 2) found that a second reading often helped his understanding of the text. Only one subject (Reader 8) said she broke the word into syllables and tried to pronounce it. The sample, therefore, revealed reading strategies that ranged from those rooted in applying specific word perception skills to attempts to go more directly from print to meaning.

When asked to identify someone they felt was a good reader and describe the criteria they used, the sample revealed a variety of perceptions of what made a good reader. Several mentioned that the person they viewed as a good

reader was one who "likes reading" (Reader 6), "reads a lot" (Reader 4) or is a "constant student" (Reader 3). Responses that focused more on identifying specific reading strategies used cited the good reader's ability to "pronounce the words" (Reader 8), "look up words in the dictionary" (Readers 3 and 8), or "reread" (Reader 5) when the need arose.

Some of the elder readers remembered how they had learned to read. While one reader said she had learned by memorizing her ABC's and some primers, another said his first recollection of reading involved being with older brothers and sisters who helped teach him sounds, such as "a, e, i, o, u" (Reader 9). Still another reader said that while she didn't remember how she had been taught, she still remembered how she had hated to turn in outside book reports (Reader 5). The others had no recollection of learning to read, though several said it was something they had always enjoyed doing.

When asked what they would like to be able to do better as readers now that they were retired, two major concerns emerged. Several in the sample felt they were handicapped in daily reading by their inability to pronounce words (Readers 6, 5, and 4). Another subject said that she was most concerned by her inability either to understand words or to pronounce them as well as she would like to (Reader 3). Almost all in the sample indicated that they wished they could read faster.

The readers all agreed that the time they had available for reading had increased appreciably since retirement, yet not all found that they were reading more. While some in the sample felt that their reading had improved since retirement, as evidenced by the fact that they read more (Reader 3), were better able to pronounce words (Reader 6), and had improved their reading speed (Reader 5), others felt their reading habits had changed for the worse. For example, one reader said she "only read things that interest me" (Reader 5), indicating her concern that she should be reading other material as well. She also expressed some concern about her habit of skimming over the material more than she had in the past and felt that, as a result, she was losing meaning. Another reader said he was concerned by his inability to understand some of the complex technical subjects that appear in the newspaper, such as the Three Mile Island incident, and felt that his vocabulary was inadequate to deal with such topics (Reader 6). He also felt that he became drowsy more quickly during reading and consequently was not reading material of a complexity comparable to that read prior to retirement.

All the readers in the sample cited the newspaper first as something they read routinely. Reader's Digest also was mentioned as a frequent favorite for reading. U.S. News and World Report, the Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, Unity, Good Housekeeping and Changing Times were periodicals mentioned by the subjects as representing favorite leisure

time reading material. Only two members of this group said they read the Bible routinely. Other genres of material cited as favorite reading included "true stories of people's lives" (Reader 5), mysteries and biographies of Prince Charles and the Queen of England, sports, books by Oral Roberts, Harlequin romances, short stories, and "experiences of life" (Reader 9).

Responses to what the elderly considered particularly memorable encounters with print also varied. Eisenhower's Crusade in Europe, Mitchell's Gone with the Wind, Evangeline, Hiawatha, and Rebecca were among the specific books that were recalled as outstanding pieces of literature.

Several subjects indicated that of the reading they need to do routinely, insurance policies and tax forms present consistently difficult reading tasks.

The Burke Interview, therefore, has revealed that this sample, like those in other research studies reviewed in Chapter Two, is characterized by great diversity in their view of reading, the strategies they use in reading, and the materials they enjoy reading. Yet, this sample is made up of a group of elderly readers who, despite differing ages and socio-economic and educational backgrounds, nevertheless are unified in their desire to become more proficient readers. Several said that they felt their leisure time would be enriched if their reading proficiency could be improved so they could process text more efficiently and rapidly. These readers are proof of the need to develop reading programs

for the elderly, and they reveal once again that good reading habits are and can be developed over a lifetime.

Miscues Per Hundred Words (MPHW)

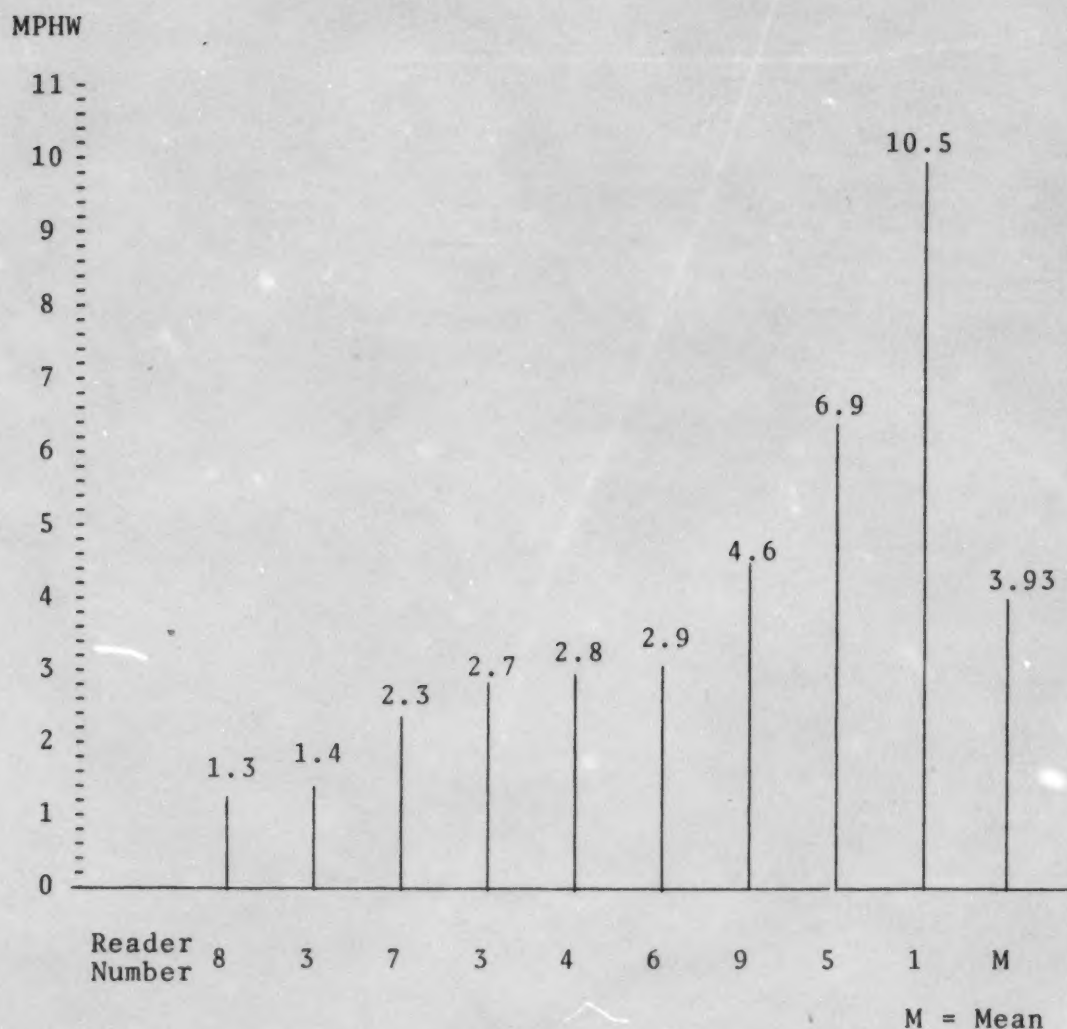
The major quantitative measure in this, as in other Miscue Analysis research, is miscues per hundred words (MPHW). This score is determined by dividing the total number of words in the story read, Blue Lobster: A Life Cycle, into the total number of miscues, and then multiplying by 100.

$$\text{MPHW} = \frac{100M}{1488}$$

It is important here to understand that this study is an analysis of miscues, the points in oral reading where the observed response (OR) does not match the text, that is, the expected response (ER). MPHW include:

- (1) Single miscues (substitutions, omissions, insertions, reversals).
- (2) The first completed attempt on any word. (Partial word attempts or multiple attempts will not be permitted to falsely inflate the MPHW score.)
- (3) Intonation changes resulting in transformed syntax or meaning change.
- (4) The first miscue on the same word in the text. Repeated attempts on the same word are marked, but in another departure from the procedures used in error analysis, they are not counted in MPHW.
- (5) The first substitution for a word that appears more than once in the text. Repeated miscues on the same word throughout the text are marked, but, in yet another difference from error analysis, they are not counted in MPHW.

RANGE AND MEAN OF MPH
(Miscues Per Hundred Words)



Although the range of MPH is from 1.3 to 10.5, the scores cluster around 2.0 to 3.0. The mean of 3.93 is skewed and high because of the 10.5 MPH of Reader 1. Excluding this reader, the mean of 3.11 more closely approaches the clustered scores.

Within limits we can briefly compare the older readers to younger readers in grades two to ten. Caution is taken

in such comparisons since the younger populations read two stories that differed in content and style from the story read by the older group and the populations were not selected in the same way. Information concerning the younger population comes from a study directed by Kenneth S. Goodman, Theoretically Based Studies of Patterns of Miscues in Oral Reading Performance (Goodman and Burke; April, 1973), in which children in grades two, four, six, eight, and ten were categorized as Low, Low Average, High Average, and High. The range and mean of the older readers' MPHWS most closely approximate those of the proficient (High) groups in the Goodman and Burke study.

In both the older and younger reader populations, the range of MPHWS is consistently lower and narrower for higher proficiency groups. This study would support Goodman and Burke's conclusion that accuracy is not a prerequisite for efficient, effective reading. Among more proficient readers it is likely that the lower MPHWS is the result rather than the cause of their efficiency in processing information. In other words, accuracy (reflected by low MPHWS) does not make readers efficient. On the contrary, a low MPHWS might indicate that subjects are slow, plodding, word-by-word readers or pseudo-readers who can recode (go from print to sound) but who cannot decode (gain meaning). However, efficient readers, those who sample print, predict, confirm, and correct with a minimum of effort, do tend to produce fewer MPHWS.

Understanding the Text

Four measures are used in this study to determine the degree to which the subjects understand the text. The Comprehension Pattern and Comprehending Score are both process measures that give us insight into what is happening while the reader's eyes are on the page. Both are derived using information from the Reading Miscue Inventory (R.M.I., Appendix D).

The Comprehension Pattern is determined by observing the reader's correction (R.M.I. Question 6), semantic acceptability (R.M.I. Question 8) and meaning change (R.M.I. Question 9). Twenty-seven possible patterns (see Appendix E) can be produced by interrelating the three questions, and the resulting patterns indicate whether the miscue results in No Loss, Partial Loss, or Loss of Comprehension.

The Comprehending Score is obtained by adding to the percent of all fully semantically acceptable miscues, the percent of those that were not semantically acceptable but were successfully corrected. This, like the Comprehension Pattern, gives us information about readers' ongoing search for meaning and their success in producing acceptable structures while the eyes are on the page.

Another indicator of whether readers have understood the text is their ability to tell someone else what they have just read. This act of retelling takes place after the eyes have left the page and requires the reteller to organize the information just read into a coherent structure to present to the listener. Rigg and Taylor point out

that telling someone about what one has read requires much more than recollection; it necessitates reflection, and it requires organizing what is recollected into a sequence that forms a coherent whole that has been adjusted to suit the audience. As a research tool, retelling a story is invaluable in eliciting whole, natural language focused on what the subject deems important (Rigg and Taylor, 1979).

Retelling, as we have used the procedure in this study, consists of three important parts. The readers are told at the beginning of their reading to read to remember so that when they are finished they can retell the story in their own words. When the reader has finished with the passage, the researcher collects the typed script of the story from the reader and asks the reader to tell the story. The researcher's role at this point is to listen carefully without comment. When it is clear that the subject has nothing more to add, the researcher begins the second major part of the retelling: asking questions that are based on the subject's retelling. It is important for the researcher to add no new information and not to elaborate or expand on given information: that is the reader's responsibility. In the final stages of the retelling the researcher asks questions concerning the reader's ability to handle text.

Cloze is the fourth indicator of comprehension. We have included a cloze procedure in this study because it is commonly used as a comprehension measure, it is considered quick and easy to administer (although two of our older readers resisted taking the cloze test) and the scoring

is easy. Additionally, the cloze procedure is believed to correlate highly with standardized measures (Bormuth, 1975). How much a reader's real understanding is reflected in the results of a cloze procedure and how much is due to the ability to manipulate syntactic features of language is a debatable question.

The Comprehension Pattern gives information about the readers' determination to make sense of their reading of the text. Based on semantic acceptability within the sentence and within the passage, as well as correction attempts, the following patterns were determined.

COMPREHENSION PATTERNS
INDICATING USE OF SEMANTIC INFORMATION

<u>Reader</u>	<u>No Loss</u>	<u>Partial Loss</u>	<u>Combined NL & P</u>	<u>Loss</u>	<u>Use</u>
3	70	20	90	10	Proficient
8	75	13	88	12	Proficient
6	67.4	18.6	86	14	Proficient
2	67	19	86	14	Proficient
5	67	17.5	84.5	15.5	Proficient
7	42	32	74	26	Moderate
4	61.9	9.5	71.4	28.6	Moderate
9	33	26	59	41	Some
1	46	8	54	46	Some
Mean	58.8	18.2	77	23	

Miscues from the older readers in this study illustrate each of the three uses of semantic information: no loss,

partial loss, and loss. In the following examples we see that there has been no change in meaning as a result of the miscue.

Whenever she sensed danger, her armored tail
around
curved round her eggs to shield them.

...but they never stay with *the* their young after
they hatch.

(These miscues are semantically acceptable within the sentence and there is no meaning change in the total passage.)

A school of young herring were sifting *with* ~~the~~ water...
(Here the reader's correction of a semantically impossible structure results in No Loss of Comprehension.)

Reader 6

In the following examples meaning changes, but it is likely that the reader gains some meaning from the sentence within the total passage.

lobsters
Since lobsterlings are food for many sea creatures...

A
(As) a person's bones *grew* grow, his muscles...

Reader 4

In the following examples the miscues render the sentence meaningless or distort meaning in the total passage.

...until one of them found *himself* herself alone....

...she moved to deep water and ^{burrowed} burrowed in the mud.

More of them were ^{killing} killed by other surface feeding fish....

Reader 9

The older readers in this study had a mean of 58.8% No Loss of Information, 18.2% Partial Loss and 23% Loss of Information. As a group they fall at the lowest end of the Proficient Reader patterns:

USE OF SEMANTIC INFORMATION

Proficient	No less than 60% No Loss No more than 40% Loss
Moderate	No less than 40% No Loss No more than 40% Loss
Some	No less than 15% No Loss No more than 70% Loss
Little	No more than 14% No Loss No less than 86% Loss

(Goodman and Burke, 1972)

Individually, we find that five of the group have a combined No Loss and Partial Loss of Information that exceeds 84%. The remaining four readers score above 50% on the combined scores. It seems that the older readers, for the most part, are processing semantic information in their search for meaning.

Comprehending Scores are an even closer indication of how readers use semantic information in order to make the sentence make sense. Also, they give insights into the readers' correction procedures. The Comprehending Score

is determined by combining the percentage of miscues that are semantically acceptable within the sentence with the number of miscues that do not make sense within the sentence but are corrected.

COMPREHENDING SCORE

<u>Reader</u>	<u>Comprehending Score</u>	<u>Semantically Acceptable</u>	<u>Acceptable After Correction</u>
8	75	45	30
3	72.5	62.5	10
2	67	62	5
7	62	50	12
5	57.3	28.1	29.2
6	55.8	39.5	16.3
4	54.8	40.5	14.3
9	34	30	4
1	24	12	12
M	55.8	41	14.8

The Comprehending Scores ranged from 24% to 75%, with 55.8% as the mean score. Within semantically acceptable miscues, the range was from 12% to 62.5%, and miscues that were semantically acceptable after correction ranged from 4% to 30% with a mean of 14.8%.

The strengths of these older readers lie, to a great extent, in their push for meaning even if the surface structure is changed from the original text. The Comprehending Scores of seven of these readers are above 54%, indicating that

when they altered the text their alterations made sense, or when they made a miscue that produced nonsense they did not read on without correcting that miscue.

There is an obvious limitation to the Comprehending Score in that silent correction is not taken into consideration. The readers' retelling of a story often reveals that proficient, efficient readers correct miscues without doing so orally.

Retelling Scores. Three of our measures of the reader's understanding of the text, the Comprehension Pattern, the Comprehending Score, and the Cloze Test results, are derived from data we obtain while the reader's eyes are on the page. They give us insights into the syntactic and semantic interaction occurring between the reader and the text. The Retelling Scores reflect another aspect of comprehension, as they are an indication of what the reader values and remembers about the story after the eyes have left the page. Without the text in front of them readers are asked to retell the story in their own words.

The following is a table of the readers' Retelling Scores, including an indication of the effectiveness with which the story is organized and retold, along with the comprehending summary for each reader:

RETELLING SCORES

<u>Reader</u>	<u>Retelling Score</u>		<u>Comprehending Summary</u>
6	75	Highly effective	Proficient
8	65	Moderately effective	Proficient
7	40	Low-Moderately effective	Moderate
4	39	Low-Moderately effective	Moderate
2	36	Somewhat effective	Proficient
5	36	Somewhat effective	Proficient
9	32	Somewhat effective	Some
3	25	Somewhat effective/Ineffective	Proficient
1	22	Ineffective	Some
M	41	Moderately effective	Moderate

Guidelines set forward in the Reading Miscue Inventory consider highly effective readers to be those with retelling scores above 50%, moderately effective readers have scores ranging from 40%-80%, somewhat effective readers have a 20% to 60% range, and ineffective readers score below 25%. Our range of 22% to 75% and our mean of 41% are roughly similar to the range and mean of the oldest readers (tenth graders) in the Goodman and Burke study and the two most proficient groups within that population. This similarity may indicate the ability on the part of older, more proficient readers to assimilate the information they are receiving from text into their vast reservoir of knowledge, organize it into a usable cognitive framework, and consequently generate retellings that reveal fuller comprehension of the passage.

We attempted to have the post-reading settings for each reader as nearly identical as possible. After each reader had an opportunity to tell as much as he/she cared to tell about the passage, questions were asked in the attempt to gain more information. See Appendix F for the retelling format.

It might prove informative to consider the retelling of a highly effective reader such as Reader 6. The following is an abbreviated version of Reader 6's unaided retelling:

"Well, it started out as a female lobster laid eggs and had the eggs stuck to her body. She deposited them, and as soon as she deposited them she took off. She didn't worry about protecting them. The eggs, lots and lots of eggs, were defenseless, and they were eaten by herrings and by fish and other fish and birds and anything else that come along that liked that particular type of food. The whole story revolves around the eggs that was hatched which became what they called a blue lobster. In other words, her underpart of her body was blue, which was not customary for most lobsters. So then, the blue lobster continues changing her shell because the shell was outgrown. It would split and for a period of time she was quite defenseless; her body was soft with no protection. So, as the story goes along, it finally come up to the time where she had grown to be a full lobster and had the encounter with the lobster trap. Before she got to the trap she was attacked by another lobster and the other lobster finally overcome her from the standpoint that she could detach one of her claws which the other lobster had and fled into a rubber boot. The lobster that fitted her proceed into the trap and ate the fish and found himself in a position where couldn't get out. After a while he heard oars and a boat and a man came along for the lobster trap and took them out and baited it and lowered them down again...She grew and reached after six years, if I remember her reproductive cycle, and she was bred by a male who deposited the sperm in a sac in her body and then she had those eggs...they became sticky and in nine months' time and then it seemed in another nine months' time before they were released as lobsters. So, making a total of eighteen months

actually from the time she first met the male lobster till the lobster hatched when they left her body and they fend for themselves. She lived herself to a ripe old age of twenty years and grew to weigh about thirty-five pounds.

Notice the use of background information and prior knowledge in answering the following questions:

Researcher: What animal has a similar life cycle as the blue lobster?

Reader 6: Turtles. They always laid eggs and the eggs hatched and they tried to get back. The same things happen to them. Basically, they're both the victims of all kinds of people, also, birds and fish....The eggs were deposited up on the sand and they tried to get back to the water after they were born. Other things were after the turtles.

Researcher: Would you say that lobster mothers are loving mothers?

Reader 6: I wouldn't think so. Certainly not like you notice in animals such as bears, or cats, or lions or tigers and so on.

Researcher: Is a lobster's growth similar to that of a puppy?

Reader 6: No, because they shed their shell.

Researcher: What does "accident of nature that sometimes happens" mean to you?

Reader 6: She was like a white rabbit. Something unusual or something that's a freak of nature, like an albino.

Researcher: How would you briefly describe this story to your friend?

Reader 6: It was a story stating the birth and survival of a blue lobster in the ocean, citing different tests and trials she was put to. Mother Nature was working to keep things alive.

It is easy to fall into the trap of expecting retelling scores and comprehension patterns to appear compatible,

and in many instances they are. (See Readers 6, 8, 7, 5, 9, and 1.) However, although the processing of semantically acceptable information aids in accurate and extensive retellings, it does not cause or assure good retellings. Readers 2, 5, and 3 received retelling and comprehension scores that are significantly dissimilar. Reader 3, for example, has a Retelling Score of 25% (borderline ineffective/somewhat effective) and Comprehension Pattern of 70% (proficient use of semantic information). The Comprehension Pattern reflects the use of short term memory, while Retelling is a measure of the reader's ability to remember, consider and construct the information verbally. The Retelling requires imposing or reproducing an organizational structure. In The Blue Lobster the author provides a schematic format (birth, development, old age) that even the least effective readers benefit from in their retellings. If it were not for the structural cohesion of the story, some of the ineffective readers might have done less well by employing a shotgun approach in the retelling. Notice how the schema of the story forces Reader 3 (somewhat/ineffective) to move along in her retelling.

Researcher: Tell me what you remember about this story.

Reader 3: The association of the birth of the eggs which were nine months. I learned a lot because I did not know how the lobster carried its eggs.

...the eggs are in the mother. But the male has to put the sperm in this special pocket that the eggs are held in and they mature.

...they have hundreds of them. There are very few that live to maturity because they are gobbled up by each other.

...the lobster has the hard struggle and he has many shells during the lifetime. And each time he loses a shell, he usually goes into a cavern because he doesn't have that protective armor.

...the logevity of the lobster, twenty years and thirty-five pounds.

In general, the more proficient readers were able to synthesize the information and impose a thematic structure on it. For example, when asked how they would relate this story to a friend, a proficient reader responded, "The story states the birth and survival of a blue lobster in the ocean, citing different tests and trials she was put to. Mother Nature was working to keep things alive." In contrast, less proficient readers chose either to give extraneous answers such as "It reminds me of TV" or to comment on their own reading, "I didn't read very fast. I'm not a fast reader."

Cloze Procedure. Cloze test results were obtained from all but two of the older readers. The scores obtained from the cloze testing indicated the older readers in this sample were able to complete this task at a level of comprehension comparable to passing a standardized reading test at the 75% level or higher. Noteworthy in the completion of the cloze tests was the number of answers which, while not an exact match with the original text, were correct in both a syntactic and semantic sense. A scoring system that accepted synonym replacement would have produced even higher test scores.

Other Factors Influencing Reading Performance

Graphic and Phonetic Proximity. It goes without saying that readers make use of graphic information--if there were no print, there would be nothing to read. However, we should consider the amount of print that is useful for a reader to attend to. In oral reading sound cues are also available and can give information, but again the question is how much is necessary for proficient and efficient reading.

When a miscue involves the substitution of one word for another, we compare the two words. The degree of proximity between the expected response (text word) and the observed response (what the subject read) is determined by breaking the word into three parts (beginning, middle, and end) and making a judgment about the amount of similarity in each part. If two of the three parts are similar, a high degree of similarity exists (marked Y), if one of the three parts is similar, some degree of similarity exists (marked P), if no part is similar, no degree of similarity exists (marked N). In the following table the readers are rank-ordered based on a proficiency score that takes into consideration the Comprehending, Comprehension, and Retelling Scores. The readers' Graphic and Phonetic Similarity Scores are then listed.

RANK ORDER READER PROFICIENCY WITH GRAPHIC AND PHONEMIC PROXIMITY

Reader	Proficiency	Graphic Similarity				Sound Similarity			
		Total H & P	High (H)	Partial (P)	None	Total H & P	High (H)	Partial (P)	None
8	71.7 (HP)	75	46	29	25	75	46	29	25
6	69.8 (HP)	75.8	60.6	15.2	24.2	75.7	51.5	24.2	24.3
2	56.7 (P)	75	58	17	25	67	50	17	33
5	56.7 (P)	85.2	62.5	22.7	14.8	85.2	62.5	22.7	14.8
4	55 (MP)	87.5	75	12.5	12.5	87.5	71.9	15.6	12.5
3	55 (MP)	84	77	7	16	93	67	26	7
7	41.3 (MP)	83	73	10	17	79	76	3	21
1	38 (S)	91	66	25	9	83	48	35	17
9	32.7 (S)	92	78	14	8	92	78	14	8

(HP) Highly Proficient

(P) Proficient

(MP) Moderately Proficient

(S) Somewhat Proficient

Possibly the most outstanding information presented on this table concerns the comparison of the proficiency scores with the amount of graphic information used. As the readers decrease in their use of semantic information, correction procedures, and retelling ability, they increase in the amount of graphic information used. In other words, highly proficient readers are content to see that their miscues are meaningful within the sentence and passage and are less concerned with making a graphophonetic match between the text and their reading. For example, proficient Reader 6 made the following miscues:

...as though her shell would ^{burst} split apart...and
 (then) it did.

^{The}
 Its skeleton is the hard shell....

...help to harden ^a the new shell.

Since lobsterlings ^{were} are food for many sea creatures...

Reader 6

On the other hand, Reader 9 appears to be more concerned with making letter-sound matches than he is in getting meaning from his reading.

...heavy with the thousands of ^{ripe} eggs....

^{Cemented}
 The eggs were cemented with a sticky fluid....

...about the size of ^{mosquito} mosquitoes....

"Is that 'strained' or 'stirred'?"

...the surface of the water stirred and flashed....

...she moved to deeper water and *burrowed* in the mud.

...both *hard* heard the sound of oars striking a boat.

Reader 9

The English language does not have perfectly matched pairs of one sound for one symbol; rather, it operates with patterns of phonemes and graphemes. Consequently, the scores for graphic proximity and phonemic proximity will differ slightly. Because readers rely on the graphic system when reading, the miscues' graphic proximity will usually be higher than their phonemic proximity. In the case of Reader 3 the Total High and Partial Graphic Proximity is 84%, and Total High and Partial Sound Proximity is 93%. This is caused by the subject's three substitutions of the article "the" for "a." For this reader these two words ("the" and "a") terminate in the same phoneme, yet the two words have no graphemes in common.

Grammatical Function. If readers are to gain meaning from a passage, they must trace that meaning on a grammatical structure. This is accomplished by sampling cues from the surface structure and predicting the underlying structure. Readers are able to do this because they know implicitly the rules of their language. They can gauge the likelihood of a particular syntactic pattern, largely due to the redundant nature of language.

If readers cannot infer the grammatical structure of the text, it is likely that they will produce a structure other than the author's or lose the deep structure and produce a garbled surface structure. For the most part the readers in this study retained deep and surface grammatical structures even if meaning changes were involved. The table below indicates that the readers responded to textual patterns by substituting within grammatical boundaries, that is, a noun for a noun, verb for verb, etc. The mean rate of exact grammatical substitutions is 84.2 with a range of 75% to 100%.

GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION
SUBSTITUTIONS

<u>Reader</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Different</u>
1	79 %	21 %
2	100	--
3	83.3	16.6
4	87.5	12.5
5	75	25
6	81.8	18.2
7	82	18
8	84.2	15.8
9	85	15
M	84.2%	15.8%

The following are examples of miscues that retained the same grammatical function and also resulted in no loss in meaning.

...spitting up the *undesirable* undigestible parts.

...her armored tail curved *around* round her eggs....

The same reader produced the following miscues that retained the text's grammatical function, but caused a meaning change.

...young herring were *shifting* sifting the water....

Bluefish were *scattering* attacking.

...the blue lobster *scringed* cringed in the *boat* boot....

A preference in dialect caused the following acceptable substitution.

...she *become* became restless and uneasy.

In the following miscues the same reader substituted a word with a different grammatical function.

Not
Nor did they behave like lobsters.

...her *body* beady eyes stretched....

Her bright blue shell was now *jew* jeweled with....

Reader 4

Grammatical Relationship Patterns. The interrelationship of correction (Question 6), grammatical acceptability (Question 7), and semantic acceptability (Question 8) on the RMI

coding sheet (see Appendix D) produce patterns that help us determine the degree of readers' concern that what they produce sounds like language. Interrelating these three questions yields eighteen possible patterns that are categorized according to the amount of grammatical strength the reader exhibits. The eighteen patterns can be categorized as Strength, Partial Strength, Weakness and Overcorrection. (See Appendix E.)

GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIP

Reader	Total S + PS + OC	Strength (S)	Partial Strength (PS)	Over- Correction (OC)	Weakness
3	97	70	22	5	2
8	88	60	4	24	12
2	85	57	9	19	14
7	79	55	15	9	21
4	78.5	57.1	21.4	0	21.5
6	72	51.2	14	6.8	28
5	67.1	54.5	5.8	6.8	33
9	67	41	26	0	33
1	58	25	33	0	42
M	76.8	52.3	16.7	7.8	22.9

The following miscues show the readers' concern for linguistic structure and result in patterns that reflect strength in using grammatical relations. Notice the corrections that were caused because the miscue would not fit syntactically within the entire sentence.

One evening a ^{© fisher} fishy odor drifted into....

Reader 6

The lobster's ^{@excitement}excited antennae waved....

Reader 7

In both examples above the readers' observed responses are syntactically acceptable up to and including the miscue; therefore, they could be categorized as Partial Strength. However, because of the syntax following the miscue, the readers corrected their miscues, and consequently the miscues are considered a Strength in handling grammatical relationships.

The dependence of the syntactic and semantic components of a language on each other is great, and the RMI accommodates for this reality in the analysis of syntactically acceptable and semantically acceptable miscues. We have seen examples of readers altering the grammar without destroying the structure and meaning. However, the following miscues cause an anomalous structure that cannot support semantic acceptability.

He began (to) dance on the tips of his walking legs.

Reader 9

It (was) full of calcium....

Reader 6

The miscue is considered overcorrected when the structure resulting from the miscue is syntactically acceptable:

...her body heavy with ^(c)(the) thousands of ripe eggs....

Reader 2

Dialect. Miscues related to dialect represent readers' shifts toward a surface level representation that is closer to their own rather than the author's dialect. The differences uncovered in this study are similar to the dialect differences shown in studies with younger readers. Three types occur: phonological, as in "gapin'" for "gaping;" syntactic, as in "laid" for "lay;" and lexical choice, as in "bust" for "split." As with earlier studies we see that miscues related to dialect do not interfere with the reading process; on the contrary, the switch to the reader's own language facilitates the construction of meaning. The following are examples of dialect miscues.

A school of young herring were sifting^(d) the water with large gaping^(d) mouth^(d)s to strain out any floating^(d) particles of food. The little lobster^(d)s, knowing no fear, bobbed innocent^(d)ly in their path.

...that sometime^(d)s happens.

...its touch hair^(d)s guiding her....

...it swam^(d) off.

(d) = Dialect

Reader 9

These volunteer older subjects seemed to enjoy their discussions with the three researchers, who in turn contributed to making the older readers feel comfortable and relaxed. The following are examples of dialect preferences that punctuated the speech of the subjects. In all cases

the dialect productions were natural and appropriate for conveying meaning.

Phonological preferences:

You 'member I'm deaf.

I jest never dreamed it.

Well, I don't know 'bout other lobsters.

...and long about the first a November....

He fed 'em, a course.

Reader 4

Syntactic preferences:

Her children was her main thought.

Reader 1

...emphasis on the fact that there ain't no justice.

Reader 2

She didn't want to venture out; kinda like a retired government worker.

Reader 2

Small animals have a extreme hard time of getting by.

Reader 4

They was gonna try to cut that out.

...the first time I ever done anything like that.

...If I was just talking....

Reader 5

This little lobster must stay hid most of the time.

Reader 6

Another thing that throwed me so much was when
she shed her shell.

Reader 8

Lexical (vocabulary) preferences:

And then sometimes these upper grade people
think they are delicious.

Reader 1

...and I mixed it with a scoop shovel....

Reader 4

Profile of Proficient and Less Effective Readers

To further examine how proficient readers process text and to better understand how their reading strategies differ from those of less proficient readers, the reading of two subjects was examined in greater detail. Subject 8 was selected as the most proficient reader, based on her Comprehension Pattern of 75% No Loss, Comprehending Score of 80% and her Retelling Score of 65%. Reader 1, with a Comprehension Pattern of 46% No Loss, Comprehending Score of 24%, and a Retelling Score of 22% was selected as one of the less proficient readers in this sample.

The analysis of miscues showed that Reader 1 had 10.5 miscues per one hundred words, or a total of 156 miscues, compared with Reader 8 who had 1.3 miscues per hundred words, or a total of 20 miscues. The wide difference between their MPHWS scores is itself one indication of differing levels of reading proficiency for adult subjects. While all readers

miscue in processing text, earlier miscue research has shown that as readers progress through school, the more proficient readers begin to miscue less. This decrease has been shown to be the result rather than the cause of their proficiency. Since number count alone does not provide sufficient criteria for effective reading, however, the strategies used in reading that are reflected in the miscues need to be looked at more qualitatively.

In examining Readers 1 and 8, it therefore appears that Reader 1 pays more attention to graphic detail of text than does Reader 8. This difference supports findings in earlier miscue research that also showed a tendency for less effective readers, or proficient readers reading more difficult text, to focus more on the graphic information of the text. Readers who focus on this graphic level are indicating that they are not using, or are not able to use adequately, the grammatical and meaning cues of the text. The resulting over-reliance on graphic information is often accompanied by meaning loss.

While the more proficient Reader 8 also produced substitution miscues that had a high graphic similarity to the text, 46% of the time her graphically similar miscues revealed discernable patterns not found in Reader 1's miscues. Often, Reader 8's graphically similar substitutions resulted from a prediction where the root of the text was maintained in the miscue. Thus, for example, she read

(c) *baby*
The babies that hatched from the lobster's eggs....

Only after processing additional text, which indicated the need for plurality, did she regress to self-correct. Similarly, she substituted "deep" for "deeper" in reading

...she moved to deeper^{er} water and burrowed in the mud. Since in this instance no meaning change resulted, the reader did not self-correct but continued reading. In other instances where meaning was affected, such as

...lobsters are ^{@ bloody}cold blooded.

or

...its ^{@ prisoners}prisoner never seen again....

self-correction strategies were used.

Reader 8's substitutions also indicated that she was making predictions based on preceding textual information as well as her background of experience. Graphic cues were therefore being used in conjunction with grammatical and semantic cues to aid in both sampling text and making predictions. For example, in reading

...and hide from her enemies in the loose stones ^{@ neath}near the shore.

she was guided both by graphic cues and content. Her prediction of "neath" indicates that she was expecting the text to deal with the loose stones found under the ocean. Once she realized that the author was writing about the stones in relation to the shore, she recognized her prediction of "neath" did not match textual expectations, and she responded by self-correcting. Reader 8 was thus showing that she was

looking for meaning, and her reading was characterized by the use of self-correction strategies when some aspect of the reading no longer made sense. Another example showing how the reader anticipated how the lobster might have felt while feasting is reflected in the following miscue:

She was able to hunt for shellfish, cracking them with her large crusher claw. Her ^{*@delight*}~~delicate~~ second pair of walking legs....

Again, once she saw that her initial prediction did not fit the subsequent portion of text, she self-corrected. This miscue illustrates the complex interaction of reader and author that takes place during reading. The proficient reader uses a background of experience as well as textual information while reading. Both are revealed in the miscues the reader generates.

While the proficient reader's substitutions revealed her attention to the total text and her concern with maintaining the meaning of what was being read, the less proficient Reader 1 lacked a comparable concern with meaning. This lesser concern with reconstructing the meaning of the text resulted in several kinds of miscues that interfered with meaning yet were left uncorrected. These miscues were more random and revealed an absence of meaning-seeking strategies. Several portions of the text proved difficult for Reader 1, and to cope with these textual demands, she focused increasingly on the graphic cue system and frequently produced non-words, which were left uncorrected. Thus, she read

aimlessly

They [lobsterlings] rose and fell aimlessly near the surface as....

and

piracy

and flashed with brassy glints like a shower of new coins.

and

defenseless

she was defenseless.

While all three substitutions maintained the grammatical function of the text, none resulted in meaningful description. In each instance, the substitution looked very much like the text word, and the reader appeared satisfied with the close graphic match and kept reading, giving no indication she was conscious of meaning loss.

This lack of concern for self-correcting in instances where meaning loss resulted was also demonstrated in other instances, even when the substitutions were not non-words but real language responses. Thus, for example, she read

button

The blue lobster began living on the bottom

and

lobsters are cold-blooded, which means their bodies
in just
adjust to outside temperatures.

and

strength

the struggle was slow and silent.

Yet despite this lack of concern with meaning during some portions of reading, earlier miscue research has also

found that readers vary in their reading strategies in response to textual demands. Thus, while many miscues elicited during the reading of descriptive portions of the Blue Lobster resulted in meaning change yet were ignored, unacceptable miscues found in more narrative sections of the passage were corrected. For example, when Reader 1 read

a sticky fluid to the hairs on her ^{@ swimming} swimmerets she was dissatisfied with the miscue and self-corrected. Similarly, in another portion of text describing the behavior of lobster mothers in relation to their eggs, she self-corrected when oral reading produced

Lobster mothers carefully tend their eggs, [@] but they ^{strayed} never stay with their young after they hatch.

Reader 1, therefore, corrected most consistently in those portions of text conveying action or presenting concrete descriptions. She also corrected

Her eyes were on movable ^{@ stirring} stems.
and

She flipped her tail and shot backward, ^{@ stirring} stirring up a screen of mud.

While both miscues reflect attention to graphic information of the text, the fact that she corrected in these instances indicates that at this point the overall text was sufficiently meaningful that the disruption of meaning was no longer tolerated.

In many ways Reader 1 typifies how many readers alter strategies according to textual demands. Some of the descriptive portions of the text seemed to be sufficiently abstract to appear either not meaningful or not sufficiently significant to the reader for her to bother with self-corrections despite meaning loss. By self-correcting while reading more concrete, narrative portions of text, this reader indicates a need for strategies that will help her process descriptive passages more effectively.

The strategies readers use in correcting miscues can also be used to obtain some insight about how they are sampling text. Proficient readers sample not single words but broader text. They are more concerned with clause level relationships than with single word relationships (K. Goodman, 1973). This focus on clausal interaction is often demonstrated in the correction strategies used during oral reading. An effective reader frequently corrects on the clause rather than the single word level, especially when overall textual demands are high. Note, for example where the correction begins when Reader 3 corrects:

while the new shell was still soft, ^eshe was able to grow ~~larger~~.

Less proficient readers tend to self-correct more on the word level, even in instances where multiple miscues occur in a sentence. Thus, Reader 5 corrected

As the ^eblues ^{stoured} ~~stoured~~ through their school....

By reading "as the blue, blues toured, tore through their school," the reader is producing a choppy text that could interfere with meaning.

The effect miscues have on meaning is most clearly revealed in the Comprehension Pattern of No Loss, Comprehending and Retelling Scores. Reader 1's frequent miscues, of which only 12% were corrected and 76% remained semantically unacceptable, resulted in a Comprehension Pattern of 46% No Loss, indicating that more than half of her miscues were affecting meaning. In contrast, Reader 8's twenty miscues resulted in a Comprehension Pattern of 75% No Loss. Of her miscues, 48% were corrected and 25% remained semantically unacceptable. Of Reader 8's uncorrected, unacceptable miscues, all occurred in portions of text that were not especially significant. For example, in reading

dam

On the dawn of the following day....

she miscued in a portion of description not critical to the story. Another instance:

keep

over her shell to feel vibrations in the water.

involved a minor point of information. These miscues may have been self-corrected silently, a strategy which, though frequently used during oral reading, is not observable and therefore not codable. In contrast, uncorrected miscues of the less proficient Reader 1 consistently occurred in critical portions of the text and thus affected comprehension.

The Comprehending Scores, obtained by adding the percent of miscues that were semantically acceptable to those that were unacceptable, provide a process measure of how closely the readers monitor meaning during oral reading. Reader 1's score of 24% compared to Reader 8's 75% most clearly illustrates the difference in their search for meaning. Reader 1's miscues result in many portions of the text becoming unmeaningful, particularly in instances where multiple miscues combined to result in more significant meaning loss, as in

musical
As a person's bones grow, his muscles and skin
grew
grow at the same time.

The loss in comprehension is also revealed in the quality of retelling, where Reader 1 scored 22% to Reader 8's 65%. Reader #8 begins her unaided retelling of the story as follows:

"Well, in the beginning the mother lobster with her swimmerets had all these eggs to deposit and she deposited them, and all the little lobsters lived. One was bluish. She was different to her mother. She didn't look anything like her mother. She had long eyes that stuck out, where she could look in all directions, and after a while she began to grow a shell and she felt like her body was very stuffy. She shed her first shell and during her lifetime she, I think, shed ten shells.

"They were small and everything in the sea was their enemy: they would eat them. But this one was lucky enough to escape and she got out each day to get food for herself. One day when she went out, she saw what she thought would be a good meal, and it was a basket of fish, and when she went up to it--she had first smelled this wonderful odor--it was such a delicious smell that she knew it would be good food so she--when

she found this basket she knew she'd really found a treat--when she came up there was another lobster, only a male and, of course, he took over and ran her away. She went to an old boot and stayed outside the basket or bucket of food. Finally she realized that her enemy, man, was out hunting for lobsters and they had taken, they took this lobster with them.

"Well, she began to shed again, and when she shed her shell and while her body was soft, another lobster, a male lobster, came. The eggs were already in her body but they knew they needed the sperm to make them produce the little lobsters, and she went nine month before the eggs were mature and then she had to deposit the sperm, the sperm which was in her body with the eggs, and they were another nine months and then ready to have the little--I never did learn what that word should be--but she began to deposit her eggs like her mother did. This lobster lived to be thirty years old."

With a minimum of questioning Reader 8 adds many specific details, including:

"Lobsters don't pay any attention to their children after they deposited them; the children are on their own.

"The blue lobsters are much prettier than the other lobsters. They are always a ugly grayish-brown.

"...when she shed her shell, she ate it herself.

"...there is sometimes in nature very strange things that we don't understand, and yet it is so. They're fascinating, because that happens, like some people are just absolutely beautiful and they take your breath away, and this little lobster, she's more beautiful than her mother--why?--what happened? We don't know...Yes, she was a blue lobster, which was much prettier than her mother.

Reader 1's recall of the events was limited to:

"The rare thing that Nature had developed that could live and be protected among other livings.

"It had such a time creating the young, that it could be done in--time. And then sometimes these upper grade people think that they are delicious."

Similarly, while Reader 8 was able to respond to open ended questions that involved integrating information from this text with a previous background of experience, Reader 1 was unable to do so in, for example, the following questions:

Researcher: What was different about this lobster?

Reader 1: Well, I don't know much about the lobster life, so I couldn't tell one from the other. Some of them were maybe better to eat than others were.

Researcher: How did this lobster go about living? What did this lobster do?

Reader 1: Well, he had to hunt for places more to live, more suitable.

An important difference in these two readers' current reading habits is worth mentioning. Reader 1 reads her Testament daily and owns three books by Oral Roberts, that she reads routinely. She comments

"When I was younger, I liked to read novels, but I don't do that anymore. I couldn't afford to waste the time on them. I picked up reading different books for a little while, but it wasn't long till I went into something that was more stable like Oral Roberts or the Testament. I put it ahead of everything."

Reader 8 states that she reads the Bible every day of her life but reads other things as well, such as Harlequin romances ("anything that isn't dirty"). In her earlier life Reader 8 was a Zane Gray fan, read Elsie Dinsmore and continues to read widely today. It seems safe to assume that because of Reader 8's wider reading experiences, she

was more prepared to handle the organizational structure of the Blue Lobster than was Reader 1, who has an excellent schematic reference for material such as the Testament and Oral Roberts.

Conclusion

Reading is a process in which written language conveys meaning between a reader and an author. This research has confirmed a model of reading that maintains that readers use graphic, syntactic and semantic cues, as well as their prior knowledge, to construct meaning. Readers over the age of sixty-five do exactly what readers under the age of sixty-five do in their search for meaning. Older readers have one advantage over younger readers--they have more experiences to bring to the reading task.

CHAPTER FIVE

A READING PROGRAM FOR ELDERLY STUDENTS

The information gained from our detailed analysis of older readers forms the foundation for the following reading program. This chapter, then, is the payoff. It translates research information into suggestions, activities, methods and materials to use with older readers. In this chapter we will present the important instructional components of an effective reading program for older readers with practical suggestions for a teacher to use with individuals or small groups, and, in the next chapter, a section that may be given to older readers who can work on their own toward becoming more proficient.

The major aim of this program is to develop motivated readers who are able to read efficiently and with pleasure and understanding. To attain this aim we must address three instructional components:

- (1) Motivation. Older readers must want to read and must have a feeling of success when they do read.
- (2) Comprehension. The goal of reading is to understand what someone has written. Older readers can be helped to reach this goal as well as to become more fluent and flexible in their reading by developing some meaning-seeking strategies.
- (3) Procedure and Practices. Specific suggestions are given to enhance motivation and help readers comprehend. These ideas stem from a model of reading that is consistent with the findings of this study.

In order to describe the program, the three components are discussed separately, but in the reading program proposed, the components are combined to develop the whole process of reading. Motivation, strategy lessons for comprehension, and application of those strategies will all be kept in focus. All the areas that affect success in reading will be addressed.

Motivation

No matter how much a teacher may want someone to read, it is always the individual who makes the decision to read or not to read. Ample attention must be given to the role of motivation. A climate that supports the notion that reading is attainable, necessary, enjoyable and worth the effort will nourish an older reader's motivation to read. At the heart of an older reader's motivation is the notion that reading is useful, possible, and worth the time and energy it requires. The following experiences will help teachers in enhancing the motivation of older readers.

- (1) Know your students.
- (2) Become familiar with the books, magazines, and other materials that appeal to older readers.
- (3) Read a variety of materials to older readers.
- (4) Model reading and writing.
- (5) Encourage the use of a specified amount of time daily for reading.
- (6) Provide opportunities for older readers to read with others and to discuss their reading activities.

By knowing your students and using that information to select topics and materials for discussions, reading, and

writing, the motivation of the reader will be enhanced. One major finding of this study is that older readers have a large store of background information and life experiences from which to draw information. From informal and spontaneous discussions the teacher can discover a myriad of interests, needs and concerns of the older readers. The teacher can use this information to increase the students' desire to read. Additionally, the teacher's knowledge of older readers can become a familiar starting point from which the teacher can introduce less well known concepts.

The teacher should also have some idea about what older readers think about the reading process and about themselves as readers. The Burke Reading Interview Modified for Older Readers (see Appendix C) will provide such information as well as data concerning any reading instruction the student considers profitable.

Becoming familiar with a variety of materials will facilitate the process of matching the older readers' interests with appropriate texts. The materials should range from newspapers, travel brochures, menus, traffic signals, Medicare information and reference material, to poetry, stories, and plays. Interesting well-written materials will generate enthusiasm about reading and will be bait enough to hook reluctant readers.

If the teacher reads to older students, they become familiar with a variety of texts, styles of writing, and organizing formats. The older reader will hear the sounds of language from a fluent, proficient reader.

The teacher's modeling of reading and writing are likely to increase the older reader's motivation when he or she sees that reading and writing are a useful and important part of life. In an instructional period when the teacher sets aside time for everyone to read, the older reader can see that the teacher too enjoys and cherishes literacy. Writing messages, making lists, and jotting down reminders are ways of letting the older student see the need for written communication.

We learn to read by reading; therefore, substantial and frequent opportunities must be provided for older readers to "get into print." When students have the chance to read material selected especially for them and to read without interruption, they come to see that reading is its own reward and easier than they might have believed.

Providing opportunities for older readers to read with others and to share their reading experiences with others enhances their motivation. Either with a reading partner or in a small group, a sharing of interest in a poem or story can create enthusiasm about reading, and readers are quite likely to attempt to read something that a friend enthusiastically recommends. Not only is motivation enhanced, but comprehension is improved when reading is preceded by discussions of ideas related to the selection. Post-reading discussions and activities will reinforce and extend concepts as well as increase pleasure in reading.

Comprehension

Understanding a written message is what reading is all about. Consequently, teachers must help older readers make a habit of expecting and getting meaning from whatever they read, as well as aiding them in extending their ability to grasp meaning from a variety of materials. From the work of Goodman (1973) and others, including the results of this study, we know that poor readers pay too much attention to the mechanics of reading and too little attention to relating the author's message to knowledge they have in their own backgrounds. Older readers have a broad and deep experience base that increases their access to a wide range of material. Teachers must help students make the connection between what they are reading and their own knowledge and experiences. The students must learn to sift out what is irrelevant to the author's message and retain and use what is apropos the message. People cannot read with understanding something that they know nothing about; understanding of some sort must exist prior to reading. As teachers, we must remember that comprehension is not a result of reading; rather, it is the environment within which author and reader unite in using language cues to send and receive messages.

Most people enjoy talking with others who are interesting and interested in their concerns. This is an excellent starting point for a reading program in that it points the way to the written form. In discussions we expect and get meaning; if we don't, we discontinue the conversation. The same should be true of reading. We discuss things that

interest us, inform us, and bring us pleasure; the same should be true of reading. We decide when, where, to whom and for how long we will have a conversation; again, the same should be true of reading. Additionally, we use familiar and predictable language to send and receive oral messages, and the same should be true of sending and receiving written messages.

Speaking, listening, reading and writing involve the interaction of the three systems of language (discussed in Chapter Two): graphophonemic (oral or written), syntactic (the structure of language), and semantic (meaning). Reading requires the simultaneous use of three kinds of language information (cues) to construct the author's message. When we are familiar with the author's concepts and language patterns, we can process larger pieces of language. Poor readers try to process small units of language, believing that precise processing of bits and pieces will result in reading. Older readers must, in all their instruction, experience using the three systems simultaneously. If they are either unfamiliar with language patterns and concepts of a selection or not interested in the material, their reading will be hampered or stopped. Reading material appropriate for those who are unsure of themselves in print should be similar to their spoken language. More confident and determined readers should tackle more complex structures and more sophisticated concepts.

Starting with familiar language and familiar concepts is just that--a start. Such a beginning assures clarity, sense

and success, but reading is not confined to totally familiar ideas and uncomplicated language. When older readers have tasted success with familiar material, they should be encouraged to branch out to interesting but less familiar material. If this diversification is preceded by the teacher's reading of new and varied texts, the student will have a natural entree and feel more secure about relatively foreign discourse.

A successful reader is fluent and flexible. Fluent readers are able to make language flow because they silently process large units of language that give them large pieces of information. Fluency can be demonstrated through reading a passage in an acceptable length of time and then discussing or retelling what has been read. Flexibility means that readers can adjust their reading to suit the situation. Good readers begin to predict what the print will say before their eyes are on the page; that is, they can expect messages on billboards to be different from messages on spray cans, and for those to differ from stories in Modern Maturity. Proficient readers know that when they are reading directions or a recipe, the rate should be adjusted to assure accuracy. In all cases the material and purpose for reading will dictate fluency. Older readers must realize that they make the decision to regulate the rate, that is, to be flexible.

Procedure and Practices

In keeping with the description of older readers and the foregoing discussion concerning the necessity to foster motivation and to strive for understanding, we present the

following procedures and practices. Although the suggestions given in this section depend completely on previously presented information about motivation, comprehension, language cues, and the reading process, we present no hierarchically arranged program in which, for example, the student is expected to master language cues and then proceed to comprehension. Instead, we believe that all the components listed above must work in concert.

A special word should be said about the beginning elderly reader. Frank Smith (1971) gives an example of the way we as beginning learners come to the concept of "dog" and "cat." Any physical description of either animal is insufficient to explain just what the difference is. The learners must make their own observations and for a time may point to any small animal as a "cat." By constant observations the learners eventually begin to discriminate and come to their own conclusions about just what dogs and cats are, but no one set of rules or checklists brought them to that awareness. Instead, it was a process of coming to logical conclusions, of being given time to absorb information and to narrow alternatives. Beginning readers at any age must be given these same opportunities as they explore the world of print.

The activities below are for those over the age of sixty-five, ranging from emergent readers to good readers who want to become more proficient and efficient.

Read to the elderly reader. Select worthwhile and varied literature. Include some of your own writing and writings of the student; be sure to include some humorous

prose and poetry. Reread favorites and initiate conversation about new ideas, new language and new interests that may be developing. Record some of your selections so that the older reader can listen or read along with you at his or her leisure.

Use familiar, predictable, and repetitious material.

Coming to print with the text already in mind can give the inexperienced reader an immediate feeling of success, and writing down a favorite song or poem, for instance, can begin a personal library of readable books. The reader can return to these songs or stories in print independent of any outside help, and the bringing of meaning to print begins the exciting adventure into the reading process.

Hymns are an especially good source of predictable print. As with any material, however, they should be used only when the reader has an expressed interest in hymns in general, and the particular hymns chosen to use with the reader should reflect the reader's experience and knowledge. As the reader begins this exciting exploration, the choruses of hymns perhaps provide the best text. The choruses of songs contain much repetition of words and are remembered more accurately than are the many verses in the song. Ever notice a group falter and mumble through a song until the chorus? All of a sudden the voices take on self-assurance and the volume triples as the chorus is sung. Favorite older hymns whose choruses have good repetition may include "Sweet By and By," "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder," "When We All Get to Heaven," "O, How I Love

Jesus," "Jesus Loves Me," "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms," and "Send the Light (There's a Call Comes Ringing)."

An advantage to making a book of favorite choruses is that the size of print can be adjusted to the needs of the reader. If large print is needed so the eyesight won't be strained, this personalized book could take care of such specific needs. A picture, drawn or chosen by the reader, which symbolizes the meaning of the song, could be pasted to the page to serve as a reminder of the song that is printed there, as well as to make a more decorative book that would give pleasure to the reader. Taking time to talk about the song and what it means to the reader would help bring more of the reader to the experience and afford new information as to the reader's interests and experiences, which might be built on in later projects.

Some hymns lend themselves to concept building:

Have Thine own way, Lord; have Thine own way.
Thou art the Potter; I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still."

Many elderly people are enjoying the opportunity of working in crafts. Why not introduce them to working with clay? As they work with the clay and begin to shape it, this very song could be discussed, along with the concept of molding a "yielded and still" piece of clay. An old song may take on added meaning. From this experience could also come the concept of metaphor and the way writers often use a picture of one thing to explain quite another - - the use of the familiar to explain an abstract concept.

After talking about the potter and his clay in relation to an Almighty molding the lives of His creation, the reader may then think of other songs that have this same use of figurative language as a means of getting meaning across to the reader:

Though your sins be as scarlet,
They shall be white as snow....
Though they be red as crimson,
They shall be as wool.

Hark! 'tis the Shepherd's voice I hear,
Out in the desert dark and drear,
Calling the lambs who've gone astray,
Far from the Shepherd's fold away.

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

If the reader is not interested in or familiar with hymns, other songs, such as love ballads, camp songs, and drinking songs, can be used. Some old favorites you might try are "School Days," "A Bicycle Built for Two," "While Strolling in the Park One Day," "There is a Tavern in the Town," and "Sweet Sue, Just You."

Help the student discover a world of print. The following activities make use of the world of print surrounding us in our everyday schedules. The use of such print is a must with inexperienced readers. Not only is this print highly predictable, but it also makes total use of the context in which it is found so that the reader can easily bring meaning to the print. The name of a cereal printed on a blank piece

of paper offers no clues at all to the beginning reader, but find that same name on a box of cereal on the kitchen shelf and the name is immediately read. When readers begin to feel more confident and have immediate success reading the print that surrounds them, they will begin to make assumptions and observations about language that will lead them on into the world of print. Using meaningful experiences with language as a basis, they will begin to notice the smaller units of language as they make new associations with words, sounds, and letters. However, these smaller units of recognition come only after the readers have discovered the meaningfulness of the printed language. If we fragment the readers' experience with language by beginning with letters and sounds, we may discourage them so that they will retreat, rather than charge ahead, in their exciting exploration of the world of print.

- (1) Take a walk in the neighborhood; notice all the words you find--in the laundromat, on street signs, mail boxes, bumper stickers, store signs, etc.
- (2) In a rest home, notice signs on doors (EXIT, restrooms, rooms), and on medicine bottles, menus, schedules, name tags, games, etc.
- (3) In a private home, check the pantry shelves, baking supplies, etc.
- (4) Take field trips to the library, store, etc., continuing to notice signs (some will be seen again and again) and the wealth of print all around.
- (5) Involve beginning readers in projects, like sorting mail and magazines, that will help them begin to recognize familiar print and reinforce their sense of accomplishment.

- (6) Use writing projects, copying for a purpose. Perhaps the older readers have asked you to serve as a scribe and have dictated letters to you. Leave your text with them so that they can copy it in their own handwriting.

Act as a scribe or secretary for the older student or encourage the student to write down stories that can be read and shared with others. Following are two stories that were written down when an eighty-three year old gentleman and his grandson were discussing the older man's youth.

How I Learned to Make the Fiddle Talk

I sneaked my father's violin out of the house when he was in town. I took it out in the hay field and sat under a tree and began to listen to the sounds it could make. Before I knew it, I was playing a song my mother sang whenever she worked on her quilts. That was all! I learned to play the violin in less than an hour, and I have not put it down since!

The White Mare

It was my job to care for our horse. She was a huge white mare. There was not a mark on her; she was totally white. I'll never forget the day she died. I was eleven or twelve at the time; that was over seventy years ago!

Every Sunday I would get up at daybreak and feed the mare. Then I would harness her and hitch her up to the sleigh. The winters were always very cold, and always the snow covered the ground from September to May. It was so white all winter, that you could lose the mare against the snow if she were not hitched up. On her last Sunday I did everything as usual, hitched up the horse to the sleigh, and my family and I went to church with the big white mare pulling us through the snow. On very cold days I would leave church many times to check on the mare. This last time she had fallen on the ice and had broken her leg very badly. Many bones were protruding from the skin slightly above her knee. I took out my knife and cut her throat, quickly, almost by instinct. I just could not stand to see her suffer. She made the saddest cries until I helped her with my knife. You know what I remember the most? The bright red color against the snow and ice! I'll never forget all that red on white. Those are the only two colors I remember of Sweden.

(Stories told to Arnold Johnson)

The story above is one example of how we all remember stories about our favorite and precious pets. Stories about dogs and other animals can be written and shared and might lead to reading such favorites as Old Yeller, Where the Red Fern Grows, Rascal, and The Voice of Bugle Ann.

To stimulate memories of the past, you may wish to investigate copies of Missouri Bittersweet by Kanter or similar magazines that are colorfully illustrated and beautifully printed. (I Wish I Could Give My Son a Wild Raccoon, edited by Elliot Wigginton, and The Foxfire Books are other possibilities.) Having these to show would help underline the sense that elderly people have much to offer to those who would like to know how things used to be. Such magazines (one could search in his or her own community to see if such projects have been published) emphasize the young and the old working together to preserve a culture of time past. Many skills would be lost if we didn't take time to "pass them on." The enjoyment of these publications might encourage conversation along similar lines:

What games did you play as a youngster?

What was summer like?

How did you travel?

What about school?

Were there traditions in your family, in your community?

Encourage the elderly to keep journals, logs, and to preserve personal history. Have the reader go through the box of favorite family snapshots that sits collecting dust

under the bed or in a near corner. Group the pictures in ways that would be interesting and choose a scrapbook that would be suitable for the project. Possible arrangements:

- (1) A favorite time in the reader's life (purchase of a first car or home, scenes at a reunion, etc.)
- (2) The birth of members of the family
- (3) A pictorial family tree

Interesting groupings are endless and should grow out of the reader's interest and, of course, out of the pictures available.

From these groupings come the basis for short captions under each picture that would be written in the reader's own words. The text should be kept simple and brief. Though much rich conversation may have been involved in the sharing of memories surrounding one picture, the reader can help you as scribe to boil it down to one good sentence to go in the book. The limited space helps make this process a natural one and will avoid giving the reader the sense that any of the wealth of words has been rejected.

Gathering old family recipes and arranging them in a special book would provide similar categorizing, reading and writing activities. These books become a special part of the reader's library.

Discuss, read about, write about, and share current interests. Sharing interests with a friend is one of the joys stemming from having a hobby. Point out to the elderly reader that if he or she has a special hobby, quilting, for example, he or she has built up a large store of words

and concepts about patterns, stitches and materials. Because the reader knows these labels and concepts, the reading and writing about quilting will not provide conceptual problems. Urge older readers to dictate or write simple directions and helpful hints for interested friends. The following was dictated by an older reader and mailed to a nephew who shares her interest in quilting.

After you have selected a pattern, use a full size model as a guide for your master pattern. Cut your pattern from a plastic coffee can lid so the edges won't wear down as you trace the pattern onto your cloth. Remember, preshrink all the fabrics before cutting.

Develop the reader's awareness of various linguistic organizing structures. The activities above have used examples of reading and writing that provide a variety of schematic structures. For example, letters, journals, stories, and directions are all organized in different formats. Develop the awareness of schema when, for example, the reader is sharing a recipe or a how-to project. When you are acting as scribe, discuss how the information should be arranged. Would ingredients (tools and supplies) be listed first after a description of what is being made? Then what? Steps as to what should be done first? And so forth. Observe how this arrangement might be different from a story format.

The following are some other arrangements of printed matter that might be introduced:

- (1) Sharing an anecdote
- (2) Conversation between two people--used to introduce the idea of quotation marks, conversation in print

- (3) Poetry in print--to introduce the idea of poetic lines.

Help readers understand unfamiliar words by attending to the rest of the author's cues and by bringing their own past experiences to bear on the unknown element. Provide passages in which the reader can provide synonyms for unknown words. Readers need to be allowed to discover meaning from context (of the passage and of the situation). They need to develop confidence in their ability to get meaning without having to know each word in the print, but they also need to have experience looking for the clues to meaning found in the context.

Ask the older reader to pretend that he or she does not know what "bovines" are. Read each sentence of the following and then list everything that "bovines" could possibly be. Keep predicting and confirming or rejecting the predictions as you move down the page sentence by sentence.

I raise bovines.
 They are larger than a breadbox.
 But they are smaller than a house.
 They come in several colors.
 Mine are black.
 They live outdoors.
 They have beautiful, big eyes.
 They eat grass and oats.
 They have horns.
 Their babies are called calves.
 We drink their milk.

Elizabeth Mutchler

The following story allows students to substitute a word or simply to skip the word "gazebo" until they reach the point where meaning for the label is obtained from the context of the story:

The Gazebo

The whole neighborhood had been watching all spring while Mr. Marshall and his family built a gazebo in their back yard. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall had a beautiful back yard. It was just like a flower garden that you see in magazines. All colors of every kind of flower were blooming. No matter what time of the year, the yard always showed color from the blooming flowers. Now, right in the middle of the back yard, Mr. Marshall was building a gazebo. It would be a lovely place to sit and view the garden full of flowers. Mrs. Marshall had already begun trailing ivy up the sides of the gazebo.

Mom said that you could see the gazebo a good distance away, as it was as tall as the back porch roof. Several people could sit inside and look at the beautiful yard. The gazebo was just like a little white round trellis house. We have a rose trellis in our back yard.

Peggy O'Neal

In the following story the reader must gain meaning from the reading in order to substitute an appropriate real word for the nonword, "muvirole."

The Brave Little Muvirole

One day a little muvirole started out for a walk in the woods. He was a frisky little black muvirole who boasted, "I'm not afraid of anything," as he started down the path, over the bridge, through the garden, and into the woods. It was cool in the woods, birds sang in the trees, and flowers grew in little patches among the moss. Soon the muvirole heard a buzzing sound, and finally he was too frightened to move. Could it be a dragon, he wondered? What does a dragon look like?

The muvirole's black fur was bristling as he peeped around a fern and crept closer to the buzzing sound. Finally, as all brave muviroles do, he pounced on the buzzing intruder. It was a big fat bumblebee, sound asleep in a flower, snoring loudly!

"Of course, I knew all the time; it wasn't really anything to be afraid of," said the little black muvirole, as he turned back to the path leading home. As he bounced along, wagging his fluffy tail, he thought about how he would relate his tale of bravery to all the other muviroles in the village.

Lillian Hamblen

Songs, and especially hymns, can also be a valuable source in gaining meaning from context. For instance, in the hymn "To the Work" the reader can understand easily that the song is about working and being good servants. "To the work! To the work!" begins the first verse in simple, straightforward words, so that the meaning of the song is comprehended in the first phrase. There are words throughout the song which may be new to the inexperienced reader, but we can help the reader see that the context may hold enough clues to enable us to make some logical assumptions about the meaning of those unfamiliar words. "Toiling" is a good word to approach through context. Although it may be an unfamiliar word to the reader, the meaning is not likely to be missed in the context of the chorus:

Toiling on, toiling on,
...Let us hope, let us watch,
and labor till the Master comes.

The "to the work" phrase of the chorus echoing in the mind would also lend meaning if "labor" was not sufficient.

Provide older readers with stories that have themes or general truths about life that they can relate to and discuss. Ask the readers to draw parallels between their own lives and the life of the netmaker in the story below. What is the author's message? Would the reader change or alter the message?

The Village Netmaker

Fifty-six years was a long time. At least, that was what everybody told Lee Cameron. He couldn't believe that so many years had passed since he first began mending nets with his own father.

The quiet little village on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico had changed from a sleepy little town of fishermen to a bustling tourist resort that rivaled Pass Christian and nearby Long Beach. Residents depended on the tourist dollar now, not the price of fish and shrimp caught in seining nets.

He stood sadly in the door of his shop, wondering where the time had gone. After today he would no longer own the little business that had belonged to his father and his grandfather. A young couple from Biloxi planned to convert it into a curio shop selling shells and souvenirs to the tourists.

At first he did not hear the young man who stopped at the corner and yelled, "Mr. Cameron!" Then, shuffling out the door, he saw young John Carter, sharply dressed in his new Navy ensign's uniform. The two talked a few minutes, as they had through the years, with the young man now ready to start out on his career at sea.

"Take care," the young man said as the visit ended. Then the old netmaker shuffled back to the door and watched the tall young man as he walked proudly down the street. He smiled, knowing that soon John would marry a girl who had also shared her childhood talking to and confiding in him as he patched her father's nets.

Suddenly Cameron realized where the time had gone. It had been well spent with good friends. He was no longer sorry that this was the last day of business. He was happy in the knowledge that he had lived a good lifetime in the little village on the shores of the Gulf.

Gloria Brown

Develop predicting and confirming strategies. Select a story such as Katherine Anne Porter's "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall." Ask the readers to predict what they think the story is about. Discuss any instances of someone they know about who was jilted. Describe a person who might be called "Granny Weatherall." As the story develops, stop along the way to discuss whether any of the predictions are coming true. Are any rejected? If so, what new ones are taking their place? Can this story be related to anything

else they have read? What about the story of the ten bridesmaids from Matthew 25?

After reading orally and doing an exercise such as the one above, the reader might try Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." Ask the older readers to read the story silently and try to figure out the ending as soon as possible from the clues given. Ask the students to mark the place in the story where they had the ending figured out and also to be able to tell the clues they used in arriving at their conclusions. They should finish the story to confirm their predictions. If this were used as a group activity, a discussion might follow; the detectives can discuss the subtle and the obvious clues.

By deleting highly predictable words from a passage, the teacher can impress on the reader the idea that he or she too must contribute to the message construction. Be sure that the passage is of interest and that the deletions are not syntactically or semantically ambiguous.

Everything that's important about Medicare cannot possibly be included in one short summary-- which is all this section claims to be. For more detailed _____ to answer your questions about Medicare hospital and medical insurance programs and what they can do for you if you qualify, call or visit the Social _____ Administration office nearest _____. In addition, you may wish to obtain the booklet, Your Medicare Handbook, which is available from that _____.

Senior Citizens Handbook

Use plays and TV scripts as reading material for a group activity. Change roles, discuss characterization, and present in Reader's Theater fashion before another group.

Dispel the notion that older readers can't read long books. If readers are discouraged from reading a book because of its size, the concept that every book is a series of "skinny books" may be a helpful strategy. It may help to convince readers that a large book can be broken down into comprehensive parts easily managed by the reader.

One book that lends itself particularly well to this strategy is Backstairs at the White House by Gwen Bagni and Paul Dubov. In this book a mother and her daughter, who served as maids at the White House through five decades and eight administrations, share a personal account of real experiences and happenings at the White House. This book can easily be divided into a series of mini stories that deal with each successive administration starting with William Taft and ending with Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The readers can independently read each mini story or skinny book. When the readers have completed the series of skinny books, they will have accomplished the task of reading a large novel. This may give them the confidence to pick up other large novels. If a reader enjoyed Backstairs at the White House, then he or she may be further encouraged to read other novels dealing with history or the White House. One such novel is The Man by Irving Wallace, a story of the trials of the first Black man to become President of the United States. Other novels might deal with real Presidents such as John F. Kennedy or Harry S. Truman.

Readers are writers and writers are readers. We have mentioned several activities that involve reading and writing: journals, logs, letters, and experience stories. Another activity, called "Written Conversations" by Carolyn Burke, involves the age old idea of passing notes. After reading Chapter 10 of Backstairs at the White House, for example, a teacher or writing partner might start the conversation by writing, "What do you remember most about the Depression years?" or "How did your family react to the bank closing?" or "What wages did you receive when you worked as a _____?" The reader writes an answer and counters with another question.

Reminiscing is a particular favorite pastime of many older adults. The time periods described in Backstairs at the White House will encourage them to recall corresponding personal experiences. From these personal experiences other writing strategies can be developed. For example, after reading each skinny book, readers might write an appropriate title for it. Also, they may be encouraged to talk and write about each period's clothes, buying power of the dollar, and wages. Readers may want to relate to other specifics, such as the hardships of the Depression or World War II.

Build concepts and interest through other visual materials (maps, globes, pictures). For elderly people, as well as for us all, it is important to keep a sense of time and place in order to participate fully in life each day and to continue to be contributing members of society.

For many people a single neighborhood may be the extent of their world. A map or globe is an invaluable tool for extending experiences and awareness.

- (1) In a rest home, have the residents make a survey of everyone's home town. Each resident could be "tagged" on the map and used as a resource for others who might want to know more about that particular place.
- (2) Help your reader make a map showing where each family member lives. This project might also encourage letter writing to keep in touch with relatives.
- (3) Check newspaper headlines, listen to the radio news, or watch it on TV. Whenever something of interest happens, locate it on your map.
- (4) Magazines containing beautiful pictures from other countries (National Geographic, for instance) could also be used in conjunction with maps.
- (5) Good oral reading opportunities abound in this context:
 - (a) Bring in stories and folk tales from other countries and read them aloud to a group for the pure enjoyment of the tales. Through discussion these tales could be related to those in our own culture, and then the foreign countries of their origin could be located on the map. This experience might lead into story telling which everyone could participate in. The students might rather tell a tale than read it.
 - (b) Possibly some of the older citizens have served in other countries as part of our armed services. Let those who have traveled share their experiences.

Beautiful books have been published that introduce the reader to folk tales from other countries. These books would have an advantage over larger volumes as they have many pictures and less print. Here is an opportunity to

make use of "skinny" books which are already bound and which can be enjoyed by readers of any age. The following list includes several of the type described.

- Anderson, Hans Christian. The Nightingale. Eva Le Gallienne, translator. New York: Harper and Row, 1965. Beautifully illustrated by Nancy Ekholm Burkert. Story setting in China.
- Bason, Lillian. Those Foolish Molboes! New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1977. Folk tales from Denmark.
- Baumann, Hans. The Stolen Fire: Legends of Heroes and Rebels from Around the World. New York: Random House, 1974. A collection of tales from the folklore of Africa, India, China, Australia, North America, Mexico, Russia, and Polynesia.
- Bernstein, Margery and Janet Kobrin. The First Morning: An African Myth. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.
- Bloch, Marie Halun. Ukrainian Folk Tales. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1964.
- Courlander, Harold and George Herzog. The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.
- Dayrell, Elphinstone. Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1968. An African folktale.
- Green, Nancy. Abu Kassim's Slippers. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1963. An Arabian tale.
- Gobhai, Mehlli. The Legend of the Orange Princess. New York: Holiday House, Inc., 1971. A legend from India.
- Haviland, Virginia. Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Poland. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963. This is only one book of tales retold by Virginia Haviland. Also available are the tales told in England, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Russia, Scotland and Spain, each in a small volume of its own.

Musgrove, Margaret. Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions. New York: The Dial Press, 1976. An unusual book in the ABC tradition which introduces the reader to the variety of languages and cultures on the African continent.

Williams, Jay. Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like. New York: Four Winds Press, 1976. Mercer Mayer illustrations. Setting in China.

Involve the older reader with youngsters. One of the most important elements in getting readers hooked on reading is to involve them in an enjoyable, natural setting in which reading is not a chore but a privilege. The following list provides ideas that might accomplish this with the older reader.

- (1) Set up story hours in the neighborhood at which the older reader can share favorite books or stories with young children.
- (2) Encourage older citizens to volunteer in the schools. Their reading to selected groups as well as their wealth of experience, which might be shared orally with the students, could be a real boon to the teacher. If former ways of cooking, for example, are being discussed in the classroom, who could demonstrate better than those who have used those methods all their lives? For more information on volunteering in the schools, write to the National School Volunteer Program, Inc., 300 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 (telephone 703/836-4880).
- (3) Encourage grandparents or those who have a special interest in particular young children to give presents of their "time" when birthdays roll around. Help them make up special cards that would carry a personalized message reflecting the interest of the giver: perhaps the promise of an hour (or so) a week, along with cookies and milk, when the birthday children would bring along anything they'd love to have read to them, or a book they would like to read. This gift of time would allow for the informal enjoyment of reading together.

In conclusion, we must again point out that the lessons presented here, as well as any activity or strategy we might use with elderly readers, are based on a reading model in which readers must be active in making the decision to read, in selecting cues from the printed page, in predicting, in confirming or rejecting predictions and in integrating the author's message with meaning they themselves bring to the reading task. To accomplish this, readers use all of language, that is, the graphic symbols, syntactic patterns, and semantic information, to bring the author into their own worlds.

CHAPTER SIX

HELP YOURSELF: A READING PROGRAM FOR YOU

How Good a Reader Am I?

Most of us would probably answer this question by saying, "I'm not as good a reader as I'd like to be" and leave it at that. If it is true that we would like to become better readers, we should find out what we think about ourselves and reading. Perhaps a good place to start is to answer



the following questions (Burke Reading Interview-Modified):

- (1) When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do? (List everything you think you might do).
- (2) Who is a good reader that you know?
- (3) What makes that person a good reader?
- (4) Do you think that person ever comes to something he or she doesn't know when he or she is reading?

- (5) When that person does come to something he or she doesn't know, what do you think he or she does about it?
- (6) If you knew that someone was having difficulty reading, how would you help that person?
- (7) What would a teacher do to help that person?
- (8) How did you learn to read?
- (9) What would you like to do better as a reader?
- (10) Do you think that you are a good reader?
- (11) What do you read routinely? Like every day or every week?
- (12) What do you like most of all to read?
- (13) Can you remember any special book or the most memorable thing you have ever read?
- (14) What is the most difficult thing(s) you have to read?

The answers to these questions can help us discover several things:

- (1) What we think reading is.
- (2) What we do when we are reading.
- (3) What we think good readers do.
- (4) What we would like to do better as readers.

These answers can also help us make some plans for ourselves as readers.

What Happens When I Read?

Let's begin by defining reading. While there are many definitions of the reading process, perhaps a simple way of defining this common experience is to say, "reading is a personal encounter with written language in which the reader

is able to understand the author's intended message." The key element in this definition is the importance of understanding. Another emphasis is that reading is language, just as speaking, listening, and writing are language. Authors use their experiences, thoughts, and language to write a message. We, as readers, use our experiences, thoughts, and language to understand that message. The closer we are to the author in these areas, the more understanding we will have.

People often think of reading as being only the ability to pronounce the words correctly. This way of thinking about reading is very limited, because it does not take into account the importance of gaining meaning. You might ask "Is it possible to pronounce words without knowing what they mean?" Listed below are some words that you can probably pronounce. Try reading them and see if you know what they mean; then check your answers with the sentences below.

 trolley school apple penned run

 The desserts were brought to the table by trolley.

 A large school of fish swam past the dock.

 The young girl was the apple of the teacher's eye.

 Franklin penned his response to Lafayette.

 The boys cooled their feet in the clear water of the litte run.

Perhaps you defined the words differently from the ways in which they were used in the sentences. Just because you could pronounce the words did not mean you could understand the author's intended meaning without seeing the words used

in the entire message.

Meaning, or understanding of what is read, is a very personal and individual matter. Each of us has had different experiences in our lives. Look at the following list of words and think of what they mean to you.

__a beautiful sunset	__good-by
__a family picnic	__prayer
__snow falling	__friends
__local train station	__circus
__a fall day	__money
__Great Depression	__health

As you well might expect, each of these words or phrases brings to mind many different impressions and feelings, each of which is shaped by the individual's past background of experiences. Reading is truly a personal understanding of what is presented by the author through print.

It is interesting to note that in most cases the older reader is at a distinct advantage over the younger reader. If you believe successful reading is basically understanding based on personal background, then you can easily see that the mature reader has a lifetime to draw upon, while the young child is limited, simply because of limited experiences. In some instances meaning for the older reader can be a review of an entire lifetime of experiences.

"How much do I read?," is a question which may have very surprising answers for each of us. When we consider all of the possibilities for reading in this modern world,

it is easy to see the influence reading has in our lives. Listed below are several examples of reading that most people do every day and yet often forget to include as part of their total reading experience. Check yourself to see how many of these opportunities for reading you have used recently.

☐ street signs	☐ medicine labels
☐ personal letters	☐ menus
☐ food labels	☐ signs in stores
☐ government forms	☐ the Bible
☐ newspapers	☐ directions
☐ recipes	☐ television schedule

When we read in each of these situations, we are always looking for meaning. We use our past experiences and our knowledge of the many uses of language to help us understand these various messages.

What Causes Problems When I Read?

Do you find when reading that you are concerned with sounding out all words in the material? The feeling that you must pronounce each word is a common one. Many of us have been taught that learning to read involves learning the alphabet, individual syllables of words, and, finally, whole words. In looking back on your school days, many of you may remember having drill sessions for developing these skills. You may then have moved to sentences, but, still, you were always asked to sound out each word, and accuracy was believed to be essential for understanding.

In recent years, some researchers have studied good readers to see what they do that allows them to read well. These studies were surprising in showing that the best readers were not those who were best at sounding out individual words. Instead, good readers were those who were best at getting at the meaning of what they were reading. When the reading plans these readers used were examined, it was found that they were focusing more on the total meaning of what they were reading than on individual words.

For example, if two readers were asked to read:

The farmer rode the horse.

and one read, "The farmer rode the house," that reader is showing that he or she is trying to sound out each word. The fact that "horse" and "house" look so much alike shows that two letters were somehow shifted. Yet, minor though the change may seem to be, the result is a major change in the meaning of what has been read. "The farmer road the house" is actually a nonsense sentence.

Let's suppose that the second reader read the same sentence as "The farmer rode the stallion." This reader has made a much larger shift in moving from "horse" to "stallion;" yet, unlike the first reader, this change does not affect meaning.

In making a decision about which reader is better, we would have to say that although the first one made what at first glance appeared to be a very minor change, it was one that destroyed the meaning of the sentence. The second reader, then, must be viewed as the better reader.

Similarly, if one person read "sock" and another "bag" in

I put my apples in a paper sack,
the second is showing that content is more important than matching sounds to letters, thus making him or her a more efficient reader.

A good reader, therefore, always puts meaning first. Consider the following changes made by effective readers while reading orally. Do any seem to get in the way of understanding what the author said? (Changes are written above text.)

(1) She thought her shell would ^{burst} split apart.

(2) ^{The} Its skeleton is the hard shell.

(3) ...learn all ^{the things} she had about survival.

(4) ...about the size of ^{a mosquito} mosquitoes.

All these readers are showing us that their first concern is with meaning and that in many instances it's possible to change the printed message without any loss in understanding.

Note how the first examples, taken from good readers, differ from changes made by less able readers. When reading

^{cemented}
the eggs were cemented with a sticky fluid,
for example, the reader makes a minor change which severely distorts the text. By creating a nonexistent word, this reader is showing that he or she is more concerned with sounding out words than with getting a meaningful message.

The difference in the changes made during reading by effective and by less effective readers can't be analyzed on the basis of how well words were pronounced. We can best analyze them on the basis of how well the reader understood what the author was saying.

"Just a minute," you're probably saying, "do you mean the actual words used in my text aren't important at all?" Of course they are important, but only as they relate to each other to convey a message. We could list a string of words,

__the	__man	__was
__huge	__hat	__worn
__black	__by	

yet, don't they mean something quite different in "The black hat was worn by the huge man" than in "The huge hat was worn by the black man?"

Our concern, therefore, is to show that to improve in reading, we need to first pay attention to the broader content of what we are about to read. Even titles can give us clues in some cases. The Biography of Winston Churchill will provide information about the content--it will deal with the entire life of a famous Englishman who lived in the 20th century. In contrast, Abraham Lincoln: The War Years will tell you that the book is limited to a portion of his biography.

By having even a general idea about what you are to read, you will be able to establish a preplan for reading, which then draws upon your very large background of information. This information would help you in reading the second book,

for example, to decide that the blank in the following sentence:

Civil _____ can create differences of opinion. calls for "war" in this context, rather than "rights." The same thinking you used in deciding "war" would fit within the context of the Lincoln book can be used when you come to unfamiliar words in a text.

Rather than becoming overly concerned with the specific word, it is helpful to focus on the broader content in which the word appears. This can help you make decisions about how to handle a more difficult portion of text. For example, in reading

The waiter in the Rib Hotel bowed obsequiously to the wealthy diners. He glanced at my shabby clothes and disdainfully led me to a back table.

Both words evoke feelings, though differing in meaning, which can be guessed at even if the two words are new to you.

Waiters in plush restaurants may react more favorably to wealthier clients. Thus, "obsequiously" can be inferred to mean something like "respectfully". In contrast, "disdainfully" in the content can suggest negative feelings. As you can see, the message comes across without using exact dictionary definitions.

If we agree that meaning should be our concern as we read, let us now look at factors that can interfere with our understanding of some of the things we read. The text (what we are trying to read) is sometimes not very familiar to us. Maybe the subject of the text is new to us--we have not had

any experiences with this topic. Perhaps the language the author uses is not like the language we usually use. We cannot read something that we know nothing about.

Sometimes the speed of our reading can affect our understanding. We can read so slowly that we lose meaning, and, in turn, we can also read so rapidly that understanding is lost. Better readers usually adjust their speed to the materials. Some texts, such as novels or magazines, can be read faster than others, such as insurance forms.

What Can I Do to Become a Better Reader?

We can all improve our reading and have a good time while doing it. The first and perhaps best approach to being a better reader is simply to read--not as a duty but because reading is fun and opens the door to a world of information. Unfortunately, reading is often thought of in negative terms with concern for problems rather than the joy it can create.

Here are several specific suggestions to help you improve your reading while continuing to enjoy it:

Read each day for a certain length of time. Begin by reading for fifteen minutes a day and gradually increase the time. You might want to set aside a particular time each day so that it becomes a part of your daily routine that you can look forward to.

Read the same book or one on a similar topic with a friend and then share what you have read. You might enjoy organizing a reading group so that several people can share

and discuss what they have read. The discussions could lead to new interests for others.

Obtain a variety of reading materials in a variety of ways: the library, bookmobiles, used book stores, newspapers, etc. Some libraries will deliver books to persons who cannot go to the library. Try to find different types of reading materials (novels, magazines, poetry, history). Reading many kinds of materials can help you both to broaden your interests and to become familiar with various types of written language.

Read to others. Perhaps you have a friend who, because of sickness, is unable to read. Read to your friend, and then the two of you can discuss your thoughts and opinions about what you have read. Read to a group of children--a scout troop or library book club. It's fun for reader and listeners alike.

Select a book on a topic you know very little about, and read the first few pages to see if you might be interested in finishing it. Many people have found new interests and hobbies in this way. Discuss these topics with friends who may know more about them than you do.

Ask yourself the following questions as you are reading:

"Does what I am reading make sense and sound like language to me? If it doesn't, what should I do about it?" (Goodman and Burke, 1972). Goodman and Burke are two researchers who give the following suggestions in answer to the second question.

- (1) I should keep reading for a page or two to see if the selection begins to make sense. If it does begin to make sense, I may go back

to reread in order to fill in lost information. Or I may stop and rethink in order to restructure and interrelate what came before with what I am reading now. Or I may reread and correct what I have read.

- (2) If what I have read still does not make sense it may be too difficult or uninteresting. If so I should look for reading material which is more interesting and seems easier.

Remember that there is a relationship between written language and oral language. Find many opportunities to write. Here are a few suggestions:

- (1) Letters to friends and relatives.
- (2) Notes (reminders) to yourself.
- (3) Instructions on how to make something or fix something.
- (4) Write a short story to read to children.
- (5) Write a summary of something you have read.



Some Final Words

Believe it or not, you are a better reader right now than you were when you started this chapter. Even if you don't follow the suggestions presented here, you are better

simply because you have practiced reading. Just as you learn to fly kites and fish by flying kites and fishing, you learn to read by reading. That's our first point: keep reading; keep practicing.

Our next point involves motivation. You decided to read the chapter. That is proof positive that you are motivated to improve your reading ability and apparently you felt that this chapter had a message for you. Although the going may have been tough in a few spots, you probably did a good job because you were motivated to get the information and apply it to yourself. All this means is that it is easier to read things that you are interested in or need to read.

Motivation is a big part of reading, but it isn't everything; to motivation we must add our experiences with life and language. If you know something about knitting it is easier to read a knitting guide. If you know something about knitting and are interested (motivated), the task becomes even easier; and if you've HAD EXPERIENCE IN READING KNITTING DIRECTIONS, the task is a breeze.

There are no magic steps to improved reading, but with practice and by actively bringing your experience to the author's message, the exciting world of reading can be yours.

THE BLUE LOBSTER: A LIFE CYCLE

The last rays of the sun melted across the floor of the summer sea. They glowed on a rock ledge where a mother lobster had taken shelter.

She glided out on the tips of her slender legs, her body heavy with the thousands of ripe eggs that she had carried for a year and a half.

The eggs were cemented with a sticky fluid to the hairs on her swimmerets, a double row of swimming paddles under her body. Even when she rested, the swimmerets beat back and forth to keep the eggs fresh and clean. Whenever she sensed danger, her armored tail curved round her eggs to shield them.

That evening they were ready to hatch. She raised her tail and violently shook her swimmerets till hundreds of baby lobsters streamed away from her and rose toward the fading light. On the next few nights she would release hundreds more.

The babies that hatched from the lobster's eggs did not look like her. They were big-eyed and transparent, about the size of mosquitoes. Nor did they behave like lobsters. They rose and fell aimlessly near the surface and tried to eat everything in sight, including each other.

Lobster mothers carefully tend their eggs, but they never stay with their young after they hatch. Since lobsterlings are food for many sea creatures, not many survive without the mother's protection.

On the dawn of the following day the surface of the water stirred and flashed with brassy glints like a shower of new coins. A school of young herring were sifting the water with large gaping mouths to strain out any floating particles of food. The little lobsters, knowing no fear, bobbed innocently in their path.

The fish had already eaten half the babies when suddenly their orderly ranks broke in panic and confusion. Bluefish were attacking. As the blues tore through their school, the herring fled in all directions. The remaining lobsters drifted unconscious of their narrow escape.

More of them were killed by other surface-feeding fish and sea birds. Wind and currents scattered the few that were left until one of them found herself alone, many miles from the place where she was born.

The lobsterling shed her shell four times in the next few weeks until the shell underneath looked just like her mother's, except in one special way. Instead of being greenish brown like other lobsters, she was, by an accident of nature that sometimes happens, a glorious blue.

Her eyes were on movable stems. She could see in all directions, but she could see only dimly. She had to rely on touch hairs all over her shell to feel vibrations in the water. And with her new lobster body came an instinct that told her to leave the light and hide from her enemies in the loose stones near the shore.

As a person's bones grow, his muscles and skin grow at the

same time. But a lobster doesn't have bones. Its skeleton is the hard shell that covers all of its body. The shell cannot grow, and as the lobster's body grows inside, its shell becomes too tight.

Soon after the blue lobster began living on the bottom, she became restless and uneasy. She felt a great swelling from within, as though her shell would split apart...and then it did. It split right across the back and the lobster struggled free of it.

Underneath, a new shell had formed, but it was still soft and she was defenseless. She dared not look for food, even under the cover of darkness. She ate the old shell. It was full of calcium, which would help to harden the new shell. During the following week while the new shell was still soft, she was able to grow larger.

When winter came, she moved to deeper water and burrowed in the mud. Lobsters are cold-blooded, which means their bodies adjust to the outside temperature. When the temperature was low, she ate less, grew less and slowed to the point of appearing lifeless.

By her first birthday the next summer she had outgrown her shell ten times and was two inches long. She lay in ambush in the swaying eel grass, catching small crabs and fish that came within reach.

As the years passed, she grew in size and strength. She was able to hunt for shellfish, cracking them with her large crusher claw. Her delicate second pair of walking legs picked out the

meat and brought it to her mouth where it was shredded.

She learned always to be alert to danger. Once, as she plowed for clams, the sand began to ripple. A flat, buried object broke away from the bottom. The lobster quickly backed under a rock as a large skate, who would have eaten her, swooped off like a kite dipping in the wind, steering with his long tail.

When she was six years old, she weighed about a pound, the size her mother had been when the blue lobster was born. Like her mother she hid by day in a rock crevice, only leaving at night when she was hungry.

One evening a fishy odor drifted into her fortress. Her sensitive antennae picked up the lovely smell. They waved back and forth.

The promise of a good meal lured her from the rocks. She set out in her blue shell armor, its touch hairs guiding her through the gloom like a cat's whiskers.

The odor of food grew stronger. The lobster's excited antennae waved faster, her mouth parts worked, her beady eyes stretched on their long stalks.

And then she saw the appetizing chunks of fish cradled in a wooden basket. She was just about to tiptoe up and eat when her touch hairs felt the warning vibrations of an intruder.

She whirled around, claws raised in defense. Another, larger lobster had come to dinner. The newcomer shoved the blue lobster to show his superior strength. Far beneath the

path of the full moon across the water the two lobsters locked their great claws together. They strained and heaved with all their might. The struggle was slow and silent.

One of the strange things a lobster can do is detach its leg or claw at certain joints and grow one back again. But if a claw is torn off in the wrong place, the lobster might bleed to death. Since the blue lobster could not break the other's hold, she chose to detach her smaller claw and escape. She flipped her tail and shot backward, stirring up a screen of mud to cover her retreat. She scurried to the nearest shelter, an abandoned rubber boot.

While the blue lobster cringed in the boot, the winner entered the basket to claim his prize. He ate with a great deal of energy, tearing and flinging the fish about, spitting up the undigestible parts.

But when the well-filled lobster tried to find his way out, he discovered the basket was, in fact, a trap.

When the morning light began to filter through the inky water, time for lobsters to return to the safety of their caves, both heard the sound of oars striking a boat. It was the sound of man, who is the lobster's worst enemy.

The lobster pot was raised slowly out of sight, its prisoner never seen again. The basket was lowered baited with fresh fish.

Peering from her hiding place in the boot, the lobster could see that the new bait had attracted another killer--a dogfish shark. His nose was the keenest of all the fish, and his teeth

were especially designed to crush a lobster.

The shark began to circle slowly, then faster and faster. It made a sudden lunge and snapped at the trap. And then just as suddenly, it swam off.

As adults, lobsters grow at a much slower rate and need to shed only once a year. The next time the blue lobster shed, her new shell had formed the bud of another claw.

While she was still soft, a male lobster was attracted to her. He began to dance on the tips of his walking legs. His long antennae waved back and forth, stroking her. Then he gently rolled her onto her back and deposited a fluid called sperm into a special pocket in her body. Eggs were already growing inside her, but without this sperm they would not develop into baby lobster.

She carried the eggs for nine months until one day she again turned onto her back. The lobster forced out her eggs in a sticky mass and added the sperm that she had been saving in the special pocket all this time. The eggs stuck to her swimmerets for another nine months until they hatched.

Few of her children would live to shed their shells as many times as she or learn all she had about survival.

In the lobster's old age she was seldom seen outside her cavern under the deep water of the ocean. Her bright blue shell was now jeweled with crusts of barnacles and waved with seaweed streamers. She lived to the rare ripe old lobster age of twenty and grew to weigh almost thirty-five pounds.

After Twenty Years

The policeman on the beat moved up the avenue impressively. The impressiveness was habitual and not for show, for spectators were few. The time was barely 10 o'clock at night, but chilly gusts of wind with a taste of rain in them had well nigh depeopled the streets.

Trying doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements, turning now and then to cast his watchful eye adown the pacific thoroughfare, the officer, with his stalwart form and slight swagger, made a fine picture of a guardian of the peace. The vicinity was one that kept early hours. Now and then you might see the lights of a cigar store or of an all-night lunch counter; but the majority of the doors belonged to business places that had long since been closed.

When about midway of a certain block the policeman suddenly slowed his walk. In the doorway of a darkened hardware store a man leaned, with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. As the policeman walked up to him the man spoke up quickly.

"It's all right, officer," he said, reassuringly. "I'm just waiting for a friend. It's an appointment made twenty years ago. Sounds a little funny to you, doesn't it? Well, I'll explain if you'd like to make certain it's all straight. About that long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands-- 'Big Joe' Brady's restaurant."

"Until five years ago," said the policeman, "It was torn down then."

The man in the doorway struck a match and lit his cigar. The light showed a pale, square-jawed face with keen eyes, and a little white scar near his right eyebrow. His scarfpin was a large diamond, oddly set.

"Twenty years ago to-night," said the man, "I dined here at 'Big Joe' Brady's with Jimmy Wells, my best chum, and the finest chap in the world. He and I were raised here in New York, just like two brothers, together. I was eighteen and Jimmy was twenty. The next morning I was to start for the West to make my fortune. You couldn't have dragged Jimmy out of New York; he thought it was the only place on earth. Well, we agreed that night that we would meet here again exactly twenty years from that date and time, no matter what our conditions might be or from what distance we might have to come. We figured that in twenty years each of us ought to have our destiny worked out and our fortunes made, whatever they were going to be."

"It sounds pretty interesting," said the policeman. "Rather a long time between meets, though, it seems to me. Haven't you heard from your friend since you left?"

"Well, yes, for a time we corresponded," said the other. "But after a year or two we lost track of each other. You see, the West is a pretty big proposition, and I kept hustling around over it pretty lively. But I know Jimmy will meet me here if he's alive, for he always was the truest, stanchest old chap in the world. He'll never forget. I came a thousand miles to stand in this door to-night, and it's worth it if my old partner turns up."

The waiting man pulled out a handsome watch, the lids of it set with small diamonds.

"Three minutes to ten," he announced. "It was exactly ten o'clock when we parted here at the restaurant door."

"Did pretty well out West, didn't you?" asked the policeman.

"You bet! I hope Jimmy has done half as well. He was a kind of plodder, though, good fellow as he was. I've had to compete with some of the sharpest wits going to get my pile. A man gets in a groove in New York. It takes the West to put a razor-edge on him."

The policeman twirled his club and took a step or two.

"I'll be on my way. Hope your friend comes around all right. Going to call time on him sharp?"

"I should say not!" said the other. "I'll give him half an hour at least. If Jimmy is alive on earth he'll be here by that time. So long, officer."

"Good-night, sir," said the policeman, passing on along his beat, trying doors as he went.

There was now a fine, cold drizzle falling, and the wind had risen from its uncertain puffs into a steady blow. The few foot passengers astir in that quarter hurried dismally and silently along with coat collars turned high and pocketed hands. And in the door of the hardware store the man who had come a thousand miles to fill an appointment, uncertain almost to absurdity, with the friend of his youth, smoked his cigar and waited.

About twenty minutes he waited, and then a tall man in a long overcoat, with collar turned up to his ears, hurried across from the opposite side of the street. He went directly to the waiting man.

"Is that you, Bob?" he asked, doubtfully.

"Is that you, Jimmy Wells?" cried the man in the door.

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed the new arrival, grasping both the other's hands with his own. "It's Bob, sure as fate. I was certain I'd find you here if you were still in existence. Well, well, well!--twenty years is a long time. The old restaurant's gone, Bob; I wish it had lasted, so we could have had another dinner there. How has the West treated you, old man?"

"Bully; it has given me everything I asked it for. You've changed lots, Jimmy. I never thought you were so tall by two or three inches."

"Oh, I grew a bit after I was twenty."

"Doing well in New York, Jimmy?"

"Moderately. I have a position in one of the city departments. Come on, Bob; we'll go around to a place I know of, and have a good long talk about old times."

The two men started up the street, arm in arm. The man from the West, his egotism enlarged by success, was beginning to outline the history of his career. The other, submerged in his overcoat, listened with interest.

At the corner stood a drug store, brilliant with electric lights. When they came into this glare each of them turned simultaneously to gaze upon the other's face.

The man from the West stopped suddenly and released his

arm.

"You're not Jimmy Wells," he snapped. "Twenty years is a long time, but not long enough to change a man's nose from a Roman to a pug."

"It sometimes changes a good man into a bad one," said the tall man. "You've been under arrest for ten minutes, 'Silky' Bob. Chicago thinks you may have dropped over our way and wires us she wants to have a chat with you. Going quietly, are you? That's sensible. Now, before we go to the station here's a note I was asked to hand to you. You may read it here at the window. It's from Patrolman Wells."

The man from the West unfolded the little piece of paper handed him. His hand was steady when he began to read, but it trembled a little by the time he had finished. The note was rather short.

Bob: I was at the appointed place on time. When you struck the match to light your cigar I saw it was the face of the man wanted in Chicago. Somehow I couldn't do it myself, so I went around and got a plain clothes man to do the job.

JIMMY.

APPENDIX C

BURKE READING INTERVIEW
(Modified for Older Readers)

Name _____ Age _____ Date _____
Occupation _____ Education Level _____
Sex _____ Interview Setting _____

1. When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do?

Do you ever do anything else?

2. Who is a good reader that you know?

3. What makes _____ a good reader?

4. Do you think that _____ ever comes to something s/he doesn't know when s/he is reading?

5. When _____ does come to something s/he doesn't know, what do you think s/he does about it?

6. If you knew that someone was having difficulty reading, how would you help that person?

7. What would a teacher do to help that person?
8. How did you learn to read?
9. What would you like to do better as a reader?
10. Do you think that you are a good reader? ____yes. ____no
11. What do you read routinely? Like every day or every week?
12. What do you like most of all to read?
13. Can you remember any special book or the most memorable thing you have ever read?
14. What is the most difficult thing or things you have to read?

READING MISCU E INVENTORY CODING SHEET

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Reader	Date	Selection
Teacher	Class	School

COLUMN TOTAL PERCENTAGE QUESTION TOTAL											Miscue Number
											Reader
											Text
											DIALECT 1
											INTONATION 2
										Y P N	GRAPHIC SIMILARITY 3
										Y P N	SOUND SIMILARITY 4
										Y P N	GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION 5
COLUMN TOTAL PERCENTAGE PATTERN TOTAL											CORRECTION 6
											GRAMMATICAL ACCEPTABILITY 7
											SEMANTIC ACCEPTABILITY 8
											MEANING CHANGE 9
										No Loss Partial Loss Loss	COMPREHENSION
										Strength Partial Strength Weakness Overcorrection	GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS

READING MISCE INVENTORY READER PROFILE

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Reader _____ Date _____ Selection _____
 Teacher _____ Class _____ School _____

COMPREHENSION PATTERN
Percent of relationship of No.
Comprehension Loss to Partial
Comprehension Loss to
Comprehension Loss

**Reader's Use of
Reading Strategies:**

Highly Effective ☐
Moderately Effective ☐
Some Effective ☐
Ineffective ☐

Percentage Line
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Frequency Line

RETELLING SCORE _____

[illegible]

Repeated and Multiple Miscues

[illegible]

APPENDIX E

PATTERNS OF GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS

STRENGTH Columns 6+7+8	PARTIAL STRENGTH Columns 6+7+8	WEAKNESS Columns 6+7+8	OVERCORRECTION Columns 6+7+8
Y+N+N Y+P+N Y+Y+N Y+P+P Y+Y+P N+Y+Y	N+Y+N N+Y+P P+Y+N P+Y+P	N+N+N N+P+N N+P+P P+N+N P+P+N P+P+P	Y+Y+Y P+Y+Y

PATTERNS OF COMPREHENSION

NO LOSS Columns 6+8+9		PARTIAL LOSS Columns 6+8+9		LOSS Columns 6+8+9
Y+Y+N Y+P+P Y+P+Y Y+N+Y N+Y+N N+P+N	Y+P+N Y+N+N N+N+N Y+Y+P Y+N+P Y+Y+Y	N+P+P N+Y+P P+Y+N P+Y+Y N+Y+Y	P+N+P P+P+P P+Y+P P+P+N P+N+N	N+N+P N+N+Y N+P+Y P+N+Y P+P+Y

From: Goodman, Yetta and Carolyn Burke. Reading Miscue Inventory Manual for Procedures and Evaluation. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972. p. 81.

APPENDIX F
RETELLING FORMAT
THE BLUE LOBSTER: A LIFE CYCLE

Name _____

Date _____

___ Birth

___ mother lobster

- ___ gives birth to thousands of eggs
- ___ had carried eggs for 1½ years
- ___ eggs cemented with sticky fluid to hairs on swimmerets, which beat back and forth to keep eggs clean
- ___ when sensed danger, would curve tail around eggs
- ___ when ready to hatch, shook tail and sent hundreds of lobsters into water
- ___ would continue to release hundreds more over next days
- ___ babies
 - ___ did not look like her
 - ___ big-eyed and transparent
 - ___ size of mosquitoes
 - ___ no longer under mother's protection
 - ___ young herring ate many
 - ___ surface feeding fish ate others
 - ___ birds ate others

___ Development

___ lobsterlings developing

- ___ shed shell 4 times a year
- ___ lobsterling in story different from mother; not greenish brown, but blue
 - ___ eyes on movable stems
 - ___ relied on touch hairs to feel vibrations in water
 - ___ instinct told her to leave light and hide loose stones.

- ___ continues to shed shell
 - ___ early years, eats old shell for calcium while new one hardening
 - ___ during winter, cold-blooded lobster grew less and slowed down til seemed almost lifeless
 - ___ by first birthday, had outgrown shell 10 times: ___ 2" long
 - ___ eating small crabs and fish
 - ___ as grew, ate (hunted) shellfish
 - ___ used crusher claws to crack shellfish; second pair of walking legs to pick out meat
 - ___ always confronted by danger
 - ___ skate released from bottom; lobster hid from it in rock
 - ___ fish trap (6 years old); fights with larger lobster
 - ___ blue lobster detached claw to escape
 - ___ shot backward, stirring up mudscreen
 - ___ while cringing in boot at bottom of water, approached by dogfish shark
 - ___ mated with lobster
 - ___ deposited sperm in special pocket
 - ___ eggs were growing inside, which she carried 9 months
 - ___ forced out eggs, added sperm, on sticky mass
 - ___ eggs continued to grow on swimmerets another 9 months
 - ___ few children live

___ Old Age

- ___ seldom out of cavern
- ___ shell covered with crusts of barnacles and seaweed
- ___ lived to 20; weight 35 lbs.

1. Are lobsters loving mothers?
2. How do you think the blue lobster differed from other lobsters?
3. Do you think lobsters have safe lives?
4. Tell me more about how lobsters grow. Is their growth similar to that of a puppy?
5. What impression did you get of life in the ocean?

--is a lobster's life cycle like a fish's?

6. Terms to check
 - ___instinct
 - ___sun melted across the floor of the summer sea
 - ___she was, by an accident of nature that sometimes happens
 - ___she lay in ambush in the swaying eel grass
 - ___skate...swooped off like a kite dipping in the wind,
steering with its long tail
 - ___his nose was the keenest of all fish
7. Did you like this story?
8. How would you briefly describe it to your friend?
9. Were there any places in the text that gave you some difficulty?

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